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T H E
W O R K S

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A R T H U R M U R P H Y, Esq.

I N S E V E N V O L U M E S.

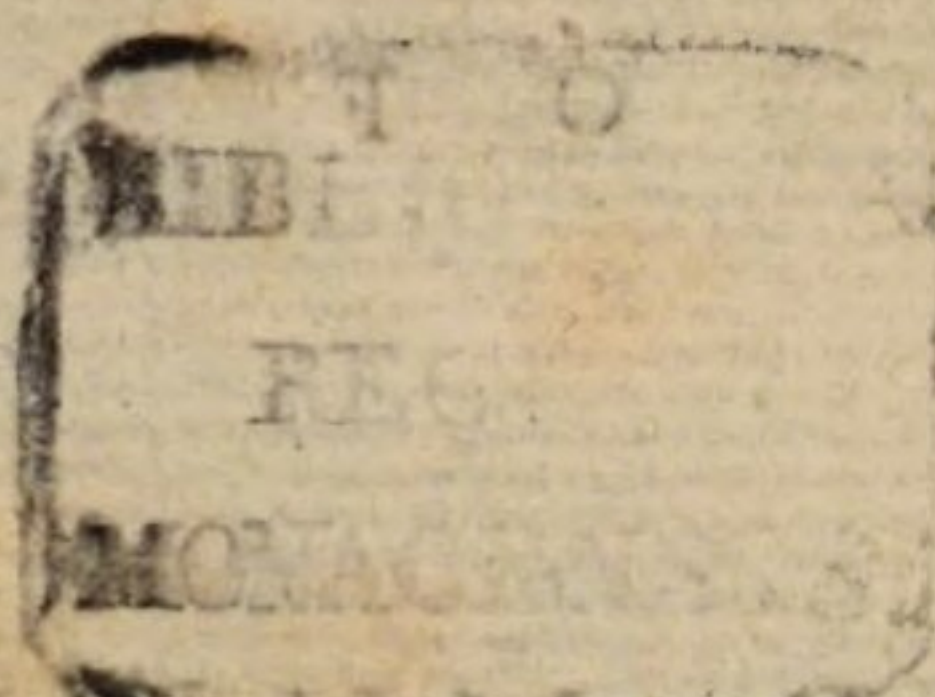
V O L. III.

L O N D O N:
P R I N T E D F O R T. C A D E L L,
I N T H E S T R A N D.

M D C C L X X X V I.

THE

W O R K S



A R T H U R M U R P H Y, Esq.



V O L U M E

L O N D O N
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL,
IN THE STRAND.
MDCCCXXII.

C O N T E N T S

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T H I R D V O L U M E.

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C O M E N T S

O F

T H I R D V O L U M E

Page

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To Mrs. ABINGTON.

MADAM,

YOU will be surpris'd, at this distance of time, and in this public manner, to receive an answer to a very polite Letter, which you address'd to me in the course of the last Summer at Yarmouth. In a strain of vivacity, which always belongs to you, you invite me to write again for the Stage. You tell me, that having gone through the Comedies of THE WAY TO KEEP HIM, ALL IN THE WRONG, and THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE, you now want more from the same hand. I am not bound, you say, by my resolution, signified in a Prologue about ten years ago, to take my leave of the Dramatic Muse. At the perjuries of Poets, as well as Lovers, Jove laughs; and the Public, you think, will be ready to give me a general release from the promise. All this is very flattering. If the following Scenes, at the end of
Five

Five and Twenty years, still continue to be a part of the public amusement, I know to what cause I am to ascribe it. Those Graces of Action, with which you adorn whatever you undertake, have given to the Piece a degree of brilliancy, and even novelty, as often as you have repeated it. I am not unmindful of the Performers who first obtained for the Author the favour of the Town: a GARRICK, a YATES, a CIBBER, united their abilities; and who can forget MRS. CLIVE? They have all passed away, and the COMEDY might have passed with them, if you had not so frequently placed it in a conspicuous light.

The truth is, without such talents as yours, all that the Poet writes is a dead letter. He designs for representation, but it is the Performer that gives to the draught, however justly traced, a form, a spirit, a countenance, and a mind. All this you have done for the WIDOW BELL-MOUR; and that excellence in your art, which you are known to possess, can, no doubt,

doubt, lend the same animation to any new Character. But alas! I have none to offer. That *Tinder in the Poet's mind*, which, as Doctor YOUNG says, *takes fire from every spark*, I have not found, even though you have endeavoured to kindle the flame. Could I write, as you can act, I should be proud to obey your commands: but after a long disuse, how shall I recover the train of thinking necessary for plot, humour, incident, and character?

In the place of novelty, permit me to request that the *Way to Keep Him* may be inscribed to you. You are entitled to it, Madam; for your talents have made the Play your own. A Dedication, I grant, at this period of time, comes rather late; but being called upon for a new edition, I have retouched the Dialogue, and perhaps so reformed the whole, that, in it's present state, it may be deemed less unworthy of your acceptance. It is, therefore, my wish, that this Address may in future attend the Comedy, to remain (as long as such a

4 thing

thing can remain) a tribute due to the
GENIUS OF Mrs. ABINGTON, and a mark
of that esteem, with which I subscribe
myself,

Madam,

Your real Admirer,

And most obedient Servant,

LINCOLN'S-INN,
25th Nov. 1785.

ARTHUR MURPHY.

THE
WAY TO KEEP HIM:

A
COMEDY,

Performed at the
THEATRE ROYAL

IN
DRURY-LANE.

——— Ut ameris, amabilis esto :
Quod tibi non facies, solvave forma dabit.

OVID.

Nam facit ipsa suis interdum fœmina factis,
Morigerisque modis, et mundo corpore cultu,
Ut facile infuescat secum vir degere vitam.

VOL. III.

A

LUCRET. LIB. 4

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. HOLLAND.

*WHEN first the haughty critic's dreadfull rage,
With Gothic fury, over-ran the stage,
Then PROLOGUES rose, and strove with varied art
To gain the soft accesses to the heart.
Thro' all the tuneful tribe th' infection flew,
And each GREAT GENIUS—his petition drew;
In formâ pauperis address'd the pit,
With all the gay antithesis of wit.
Their sacred art poor poets own'd a crime;
They sigh'd in simile; they bow'd in rhyme,
For charity they all were forc'd to beg;
And ev'ry Prologue was "a wooden leg."*

*Next these a hardy, manly race appear'd,
Who knew no dullness, and no critics fear'd.
From Nature's store each curious tint they drew,
Then boldly held the piece to public view:
"Lo! here, exact proportion! just design!
"The bold relief! and the unerring line!
"Mark in soft union how the colours strike!
"This, Sirs, you will, or this you ought to like."
They bid defiance to the foes of wit,
"Scatter'd like ratsbane up and down the pit."*

*Such prologues were of yore;—our bard to-night
Disdains a false compassion to excite:
Nor too secure your judgment would oppose;
He packs no jury, AND HE DREADS NO FOES,
To govern here no party can expect;
An audience will preserve its own respect.*

*To catch the foibles, that misguide the fair,
From trifles spring, and end in lasting care,
Our author aims; nor this alone he tries,
But as fresh objects, and new manners rise,
He bids his canvass glow with various dyes;*

4 P R O L O G U E.

*Where sense and folly mix in dubious strife,
Alternate rise, and struggle into life.
Judge if with art the mimic strokes be blend;
If amicably light and shade contend;
The mental features if be trace with skill;
See the piece first, then DAMN it if you will.*

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

LOVEMORE,	Mr. GARRICK,
SIR BASHFULL CONSTANT,	Mr. YATES,
SIR BRILLIANT FASHION,	Mr. PALMER,
WILLIAM, Serv. to LOVEMORE,	Mr. KING,
SIDEBBOARD, Serv. to SIR BASH.	Mr. ACKMAN
POMPEY, a Black Boy, &c.	

W O M E N.

The WIDOW BELLMOUR,	Mrs. CIBBER,
Mrs. LOVEMORE,	Mrs. YATES,
LADY CONSTANT,	Mrs. DAVIES,
MUSLIN, Maid to Mrs. LOVE- MORE,	} Mrs. CLIVE.
MIGNIONET, Maid to the Wi- DOW.	} Miss BRADSHAW,
FURNISH, Maid to LADY CON- STANT,	} Miss HIPPISEY,

5

T H E
W A Y T O K E E P H I M.

A C T the F I R S T.

Scene, an APARTMENT in LOVEMORE'S HOUSE :

WILLIAM *and* SIDEBORD, *discovered at a Game of*
Cards.

WILLIAM.

A PLAGUE go with it ! I have turned out my
game : Is forty seven good ?

SIDEBORD.

Equal.

WILLIAM.

Confound the cards ! tierce to a queen ?

SIDEBORD.

Equal.

WILLIAM.

There again ! ruined, stock and block : nothing
can save me. I don't believe there is a footman in
England plays with worse luck than myself. Four
aces are fourteen.

A 3

SIDE-

6 THE WAY TO KEEP HIM,

SIDEBOARD.

That's hard, cruel by Jupiter! Aces against me every time.

WILLIAM.

Four aces are fourteen : fifteen. (*Plays*)

SIDEBOARD.

There's your equality.

WILLIAM.

Very well : I turned out my point. Sixteen, (*Plays*) seventeen. (*Plays.*)

Enter MUSLIN.

MUSLIN.

There's a couple of you, indeed ! You are so fond of the vices of your betters, that you are scarce out of your beds, but you must imitate them and their profligate ways. Set you up forsooth !

WILLIAM.

Prithee, be quiet, woman, do. Eighteen. (*Plays*)

MUSLIN.

Upon my word !—With your usual ease Mr. Coxcomb.

WILLIAM.

Manners, Mrs. Muslin : you see Mr. Sideboard here ; he is just come on a message from Sir Bashfull Constant.

Constant. Have some respect for a stranger. Nineteen, clubs.—(*Plays.*)

MUSLIN.

It would become Mr. Sideboard to go back with his answer, and it would become you to send my Lady word—

WILLIAM.

Command your tongue, Mrs. Muslin: you'll put me out. What shall I play?—He will go back with his answer in good time. Let his master wait till it suits our conveniency. Nineteen, clubs: where shall I go now?

MUSLIN.

Have done with your folly, Mr. Impertinent. My Lady desires to know—

WILLIAM.

I tell you, woman, my master and I desire to have nothing to do with you and your Lady. Twenty, diamonds. (*Plays*)

MUSLIN.

But I tell you, Mr. Brazen, that my Lady desires to know at what hour your master came home last night, and how he does this morning?

WILLIAM.

Ridiculous! Don't disturb us with that nonsense now: you see I am not at leisure. I and my master are resolved to be teased no more by you; and so Mrs. Go-between, you may return as you came,

8 THE WAY TO KEEP HIM,

What the devil shall I play? We will have nothing to do with you, I tell you.

MUSLIN.

You'll have nothing to do with us! But you shall have to do with us, or I'll know the reason why. *(She snatches the cards from him, and throws them about.)*

WILLIAM.

Death and fury! this meddling woman has destroyed my whole game. A man might as well be married, as be treated in this fashion.

SIDEBOARD.

I shall score you for this, Mr. William: I was sure of the cards, and that would have made me up.

WILLIAM.

No you'll score nothing for this. You win too much of me. I am a very pretty annuity to you.

SIDEBOARD.

Annuity say you? I lose a fortune to you in the course of the year. How could you, Mrs. Muslin, behave in this sort to persons of our dignity?

MUSLIN.

Decamp with your dignity; take your answer to your master; turn upon your rogues heel, and rid the house.

SIDEBOARD.

I shan't dispute with you. I hate wrangling: I leave that to lawyers and married people; they have nothing else to do. Mr. William, I shall let Sir
Bashfull

Bashfull know that Mr. Lovemore will be at home for him. When you come to our house, I'll give you your revenge. We can have a snug party there, and I promise you a glass of choice Champaigne: it happens to be a good batch; Sir Bashfull gets none of it: I keep it for my own friends. *Au revoir.*

[*Exit.*]

WILLIAM. (*to MUSLIN.*)

You see what mischief you have made.

MUSLIN.

Truce with your foolery, and now, Sir, be so obliging as to send my Lady an answer to her questions? How and when your rakehelly master came home last night?

WILLIAM.

I'll tell you one thing, Mrs. Muslin; you and my master will be the death of me at last. In the name of charity, what do you both take me for? Whatever appearances may be, I am but of mortal mould; nothing supernatural about me.

MUSLIN.

Upon my word, Mr. Powder-Puff!

WILLIAM.

I have not, indeed; and flesh and blood, let me tell you, can't hold it always at this rate. I can't be for ever a slave to Mr. Lovemore's eternal frolicks, and to your second-hand airs.

MUSLIN.

Second-hand airs!

WIL-

WILLIAM.

Yes, second-hand airs ! you take them at your ladies toilets with their cast gowns, and so you descend to us with them.—And then on the other hand, there's my master !—Because he chuses to live upon the principal of his health, and so run out his whole stock as fast as he can, he must have my company with him in his devil's dance to the other world ! Never at home till three, four, five, six in the morning.

MUSLIN.

Ay, a vile ungrateful man ! always ranging abroad, and no regard for a wife that doats upon him. And your love for me is all of a piece. I have no patience with you both ; a couple of false, perfidious, abandoned profligates !

WILLIAM.

Hey ! where is your tongue running ? My master, as the world goes, is a good sort of a civil kind of a husband ; and I, heaven help me ! a poor simpleton of a constant, amorous puppy, who bear with all the whims of my little tyrant here. Come and kiss me, you jade, come and kiss me.

MUSLIN.

Paws off Cæsar. Don't think to make me your dupe. I know when you go with him to this new lady, this Bath-acquaintance ; and I know you are as false as my master, and give all my dues to your Mrs. Mignonet there.

WILLIAM.

Hush ! not a word of that. I am ruined, pressed,
and

and sent on board a Tender directly, if you blab that I trusted you with that secret.—But to charge me with falsehood!—injustice and ingratitude.—My master, to be sure, does drink an agreeable dish of tea with the widow. He has been there every evening this month past. How long things are to be in this train, heaven only knows. But he does visit there, and I attend him. I ask my master, Sir, says I, what time will you please to want me? He fixes the hour, and I strut by Mrs. Mignonet, without so much as tipping her a single glance. She stands watering at the mouth, and a pretty fellow that, says she: Ay, gaze on, say I, gaze on: I know what you would be at: You would be glad to have me: But four grapes, my dear; and so home I come, to cherish my own lovely little wanton: you know I do, and after toying with thee, I fly back to my master, later indeed than he appoints, but always too soon for him. He is loth to part: he lingers and dangles, and I stand cooling my heels. Oh! to the devil I pitch such a life.

MUSLIN.

Why don't you strive to reclaim the vile man?

WILLIAM.

Softly; not so fast. I have my talent, to be sure; yes, I must acknowledge some talent. But can you suppose that I have power to turn the drift of his inclinations? Can I give him a new taste, and lead him as I please? And to whom? To his wife? Ridiculous! A wife has no attraction now; the spring of the passions flies back; it won't do.

MUSLIN.

MUSLIN.

Fine talking! and you admire yourself for it, don't you? Can you proceed, Sir?

WILLIAM.

I tell you a wife is out of date: the time was, but that's all over; a wife is a drug now; mere tar-water, with every virtue under heaven, but nobody takes it.

MUSLIN.

Have done, or I'll print these ten nails upon your rogue's face.

WILLIAM.

Come and kifs me, I say.

MUSLIN.

A fiddlestick for your kiffes, while you encourage your master to open rebellion against the best of wives.

WILLIAM.

I tell you it's all her own fault. Why does not she study to please him as you do me? Come, and throw you arms about my neck.

MUSLIN.

As I used to do, Mr. Impudence?

WILLIAM.

Then I must force you to you own good. (*kisses her*) Pregnant with delight! egad, if my master was not in the next room—(*bell rings.*)

Mus-

MUSLIN.

Hush ! my Lady's bell : how long as he been up ?

WILLIAM.

He has been up—(*kisses her*) 'Sdeath ! you have set me all on fire. (*kisses her.*)

MUSLIN.

There, there ; have done now ; the bell rings again. What must I say ? When did he come home ?

WILLIAM.

He came home——(*kisses her*) he came home at five this morning ; damned himself for a blockhead (*kisses*) Went to bed in a furly humour ; was tired of himself and every body else. (*bell rings, he kisses her.*) And he is now in tip-top spirits with Sir Brilliant Fashion in that room yonder.

MUSLIN.

Sir Brilliant Fashion ? I wish my Lady would mind what he says to her—you great bear ! you have given me such a flush in my face ! (*takes a pocket looking glass*) I look pretty well, I think. There (*kisses him*) have done, and let me begone.

[*Exit.*

WILLIAM.

There goes high and low life contrasted in one person. She has not dived to the bottom of my master's secrets ; that's one good thing. What she knows, she'll blab. We shall hear of this widow from Bath : but the plot lies deeper than they are aware of

14 THE WAY TO KEEP HIM,

of. Enquire they will; and let 'em, say I; their answer will do 'em no good. "Mr. Lovemore visit the widow Bellmour!" We know "no such person." That's what they'll get for their pains. Their puzzle will be greater than ever, and they may sit down to chew the cud of disappointed malice.—Hush! my master and Sir Brilliant: I'll take care of a single rogue, and get me out of their way.

[Exit.

Enter LOVEMORE and SIR BRILLIANT.

LOVEMORE.

My dear Sir Brilliant, I must both pity and laugh at you. Thou art metamorphosed into the most whimsical being!

SIR BRILLIANT.

If your raillery diverts you, go on with it. This is always the case: apply for sober advice, and your friend plays you off with a joke.

LOVEMORE.

Sober advice! very far gone indeed. There is no such thing as talking soberly to the tribe of lovers. That eternal absence of mind that possesses you all! There is no society with you. I was damnable company myself, when I was one of the pining herd: but a dose of matrimony has cooled me pretty handsomely; and here comes *repetatur haustus*.

Enter MUSLIN.

MUSLIN.

My Lady sends her compliments, and begs to know how you do this morning.

LOVE-

LOVEMORE. (*aside to Sir Brilliant.*)

The novelty of the compliment is enlivening—It is the devil to be teased in this manner.—What did you say, child?

MUSLIN.

My Lady hopes you find yourself well this morning.

LOVEMORE.

Ay, your Lady:—give her my compliments, and tell her—tell her I hope she is well, and—(*yawns.*)

MUSLIN.

She begs you won't think of going out without seeing her.

LOVEMORE.

To be sure, she has such variety every time one sees her—my head aches woefully—tell your lady—I shall be glad to see her; I'll wait on her---(*yawns*) tell her what you will.

MUSLIN.

A brute!--I shall let my lady know, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

LOVEMORE.

My dear Sir Brilliant, you see me an example before your eyes. Put the widow Bellmour out of your head, and let my Lord Etheridge be the victim for you.

SIR

SIR BRILLIANT.

Positively no; my pride is picqued. My Lord Etheridge shall find me a more formidable rival than he imagines. By the way, how long has the noble Peer been in England?

LOVEMORE.

His motions are unknown to me.—(*aside*) I don't like that question.—His Lordship is in France, is not he?

SIR BRILLIANT.

No; he is certainly returned. The match is to be concluded privately.—He visits her *incog*.

LOVEMORE. (*forcing a laugh.*)

Oh! no; that can't be; my Lord Etheridge loves parade. I cannot help laughing. The jealousy of you lovers is for ever conjuring up phantoms to torment yourselves. My dear Sir Brilliant, wait for realities; there are enough in life, and you may teach your fancy to be at rest, and give you no further trouble.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Nay, don't let your fancy run away with you. What I tell you, is the real truth.

LOVEMORE.

Well, if it be true, and if Lord Etheridge is come to England to marry, do you go to France not to marry, and you will have the best of the bargain.

Enter

Enter WILLIAM.

WILLIAM.

Sir Bashfull Constant is in his chariot at the upper end of the street, and if your Honour is at leisure, he will wait upon you.

LOVEMORE.

Have not I sent him word I should be at home? Let him come as soon as he will. [*Exit William*]
Another instance, Sir Brilliant, to deter you from all thoughts of matrimony.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Po! hang him; he has no precedent for me. A younger brother, who lived in middling life, comes to a title and an estate on the death of a consumptive Baronet; marries a woman of quality, and now carries the primitive ideas of his narrow education into high life. Don't you remember when he had chambers in Fig tree court, and used to saunter and lounge away his time in Temple Coffee houses? The fellow is as dull as a bill in chancery.

LOVEMORE.

But he is improved since that time.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Impossible; don't you see how he goes on? He knows nothing of the world; if his eyes meet yours, he blushes up to his ears, and looks suspicious, as if he imagined you have a design upon him.

LOVEMORE.

I can explain that part of his character. He has a mortal aversion to wit and raillery, and dreads nothing so much as being laughed at for being particular.

SIR BRILLIANT.

And so, fearing to be ridiculous, he becomes substantially so every moment.

LOVEMORE.

Even so, and if you look at him, he shrinks back from your observation, casting a fly, frow, jealous eye all round him, like Miss Bumpkin in a country village, awkwardly endeavouring to conceal what the increase of her shape discovers to the whole parish.

SIR BRILLIANT.

And then his behaviour to his lady!

LOVEMORE.

Why, as to that point, I don't think he hates her. His fear of ridicule may be at the bottom. He has strange notions about the dignity of a husband. There is a secret, which he would fain tell me, and yet he is shy, and he hints, and he hesitates, and then he retreats back into himself, and ends just where he began. But with all his faults, he has fits of good nature. There;—his chariot's at the door.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Lady Constant, you mean, has fits of good nature. Have you made any progress there?

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

That's well from you, who are the formidable man in that quarter.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Oh! no; positively, no pretence, no colour for it.

LOVEMORE.

Don't I know that you have made advances?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Advances! I pity my Lady Constant, and—

LOVEMORE.

Well, that's generous—hush! I hear him coming. Sir Brilliant, I admire your amorous charity of all things.

Enter SIR BASHFULL CONSTANT.

SIR BASHFULL.

Mr. Lovemore, I have taken the liberty—but you seem to be busy, and I intrude perhaps.

LOVEMORE.

Oh, by no means: walk in Sir Bashfull.

SIR BASHFULL.

Sir Brilliant, I am glad to see you. (*Bows awkwardly.*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

You do me honour, Sir. I hope you left my Lady well.

SIR BASHFULL.

I can't say, Sir; I am not her physician.

SIR BRILLIANT. (*aside*)

An absurd brute!—Lovemore, I'll just step and pay a short visit to our friend over the way.

LOVEMORE.

Why in such a hurry?

SIR BRILLIANT.

I shall return immediately. I'll be with you before you are dressed. Sir Bashfull, I kiss your hand.
[Exit.]

SIR BASHFULL.

I am glad he is gone. I have something, Mr. Lovemore, that I want to advise with you about.

LOVEMORE.

Have you!

SIR BASHFULL.

I have had another brush with my wife.

LOVEMORE.

I am sorry for it, Sir Bashfull.—(*aside*) I am perfectly glad of it.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Pretty warm the quarrel was. She took it in a high tone. Sir Bashfull, says she, I wonder you will disgrace yourself at this rate. You know my pin money is not sufficient. The Mercer and every body duning me! I can't go on after this fashion, says she, and then something about her quality.— You know, Mr. Lovemore, (*smiling*) she is a woman of high quality.

LOVEMORE.

Yes, and a very fine woman.

SIR BASHFULL.

No, no, no; not much of that—and yet—(*looks at him and smiles*) Do you think her a fine woman?

LOVEMORE.

Undoubtedly; where do you see any body that outshines her?

SIR BASHFULL.

Why to be sure—(*smiling*) one does not often see her eclipsed. I think she is what you may call a fine woman. She keeps good company.

LOVEMORE.

The very best.

SIR BASHFULL.

Yes, yes; your tiptop, none else. And yet to encourage her too far were dangerous. Too comply-

ing a husband makes but a sorry figure in the eyes of the world.

LOVEMORE.

The world will talk, Sir Bashfull.

SIR BASHFULL.

Too fast, Mr. Lovemore. Their tongues will run on, and one does not like to give them a subject. I answered her stoutly : Madam, says I, a fig for your quality : I am master in my own house, and who do you think—(*winks at Lovemore*) putting myself in a passion, you know—Who do you think is to pay for your Cats and your Dogs, and your Monkeys, and your Squirrels, and your gaming debts ?

LOVEMORE.

How could you ? That was sharply said.

SIR BASHFULL.

Yes ; I gave it her. But for all that I am main good natured at the bottom.

LOVEMORE.

You was not in earnest then ?

SIR BASHFULL.

No, no ; that's the point : a man must keep up his own dignity. I'll tell you what I did.

LOVEMORE.

Well ;—you did what's proper I dare say.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

I hope you'll think so.—Don't laugh at me.—
Come, I will tell you. I went to her Mercer sily
and paid him the money. (*smiling*)

LOVEMORE.

Did you?

SIR BASHFULL. (*Looking alarmed*)

Was not it right?

LOVEMORE.

It was elegant.

SIR BASHFULL.

I am glad you approve. I took care to save ap-
pearances. One would not have the world know it.

LOVEMORE

By no means.

SIR BASHFULL.

It would make them think me too uxorious.

LOVEMORE.

So it would—(*aside*) I must encourage that no-
tion. While you live, guard against being too ux-
orious. Though our wives deserve “our fondness,”
the world will laugh at us;—and hark ye, if our wives
don't deserve it, they'll laugh at us the more.

SIR BASHFULL.

I know it. And so says I, Mr. Lutestring, there's
your money, but tell no body that I paid it sily.

LOVEMORE.

Why, that's doing a genteel thing by stratagem.—
Admirably contrived!

SIR BASHFULL.

I think it was. But I have a deeper secret for
you.

LOVEMORE.

Have you?

SIR BASHFULL.

I have.—May I trust you?

LOVEMORE.

Now there you hurt me. I feel that, Sir Bashfull.

SIR BASHFULL.

I beg your pardon. I know you are my friend.
I have great confidence in you. You must know---
look ye, Mr. Lovemore—you must know—

Enter MUSLIN.

MUSLIN.

My lady desires to know if you chuse a dish of tea
this morning.

LOVEMORE.

Po! ridiculous!---tell your mistress --- go about
your business. (*Turns her out*)

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

I see how it is. He does not care a cherry-stone for his wife.

LOVEMORE.

Such impertinence!—Well, Sir Bashfull.

SIR BASHFULL.

He does not value her a pinch of snuff. (*aside*)

LOVEMORE.

Well, I am all attention.

SIR BASHFULL.

It does not signify. A foolish affair; I won't trouble you.

LOVEMORE.

Nay, that's unkind. It will be no trouble.

SIR BASHFULL.

Well, well, I—I—Do you think Muslin did not overhear us?

LOVEMORE.

Not a syllable. Come, we are safe.

SIR BASHFULL.

I don't know but—let me ask you a question, first.
—Have you any regard for your lady?

LOVEMORE.

The highest value for her. But then you know appearances—

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Right!—I repose it with you.—You must know, Mr. Lovemore, as I told you, I am at the bottom very good natured, and though it may be thought—we are interrupted again.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Lovemore, I have paid my visit.

LOVEMORE.

Pshaw!—this is unlucky——You are as good as your word, Sir Brilliant.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Perhaps you have business?

SIR BASHFULL.

No, no business—(*turns to* LOVEMORE.) there's no proceeding now——I was going, Sir Brilliant. Mr. Lovemore, I wish you a good day.

LOVEMORE.

Po! prithee, you shan't leave me yet.

SIR BASHFULL.

I must; I can't stay. (*aside to* LOVEMORE) Another time. Suppose you call at my house at one o'clock.

LOVEMORE.

With all my heart.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Do so; nobody shall interrupt us. Mr. Lovemore, I take my leave. Sir Brilliant, I kiss your hand. You won't forget, Mr. Lovemore.

LOVEMORE.

Oh! no; depend upon me.

SIR BASHFULL.

A good morning. He is the only friend I have.
[Exit.]

LOVEMORE.

Ha! ha! you broke in in the most critical moment. He was just going to be delivered of his secret.

SIR BRILLIANT.

I beg your pardon. How could you let me?

LOVEMORE.

Nay, no matter. I shall worm it out of him.

Enter MUSLIN.

MUSLIN.

My Lady, Sir, is quite impatient.

LOVEMORE.

Po! for ever teasing! I'll wait upon her presently.
[Exit MUSLIN.]

SIR

SIR BRILLIANT.

I'll step and chat with her while you drefs. May I take the liberty?

LOVEMORE.

You know you may: no ceremony. How could you ask me fuch a question?—Apropos, Sir Brilliant; I want a word with you. Step with me into the ftudy for a moment.

SIR BRILLIANT.

I attend you.

LOVEMORE.

Poor Sir Bashfull!—ha! ha!—a ridiculous, unaccountable—What does he mean?

[*Exeant.*]

Scene another Apartment.

Mrs. LOVEMORE *at her Tea-Table.*

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

This trash of tea! I don't know why I drink fo much of it. Heigho!—what keeps Muslin? Surely never was an unhappy woman treated with fuch cruel indifference; nay, with fuch open, fuch undisguifed infolence of gallantry.

Enter MUSLIN.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Well, Muslin? have you feen his Prime Minister?

Mus-

MUSLIN.

Yes, Ma'am, I have seen Mr. William. He says his master is going out, according to the old trade, and he does not expect to see him again till to-morrow morning. Mr. Lovemore is now in the study. Sir Brilliant Fashion is with him: I heard them, as I passed by the door, laughing as loud as two actors in a comedy.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

About some precious mischief, I'll be sworn, and all at my cost. Heigho!

MUSLIN.

Dear Ma'am, why chagrine yourself about a vile man, that is not worth——no, as I hope for mercy, not worth a single sigh?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

What can I do, Muslin?

MUSLIN.

Do, Ma'am——If I was as you, I'd do for him. If I could not cure my grief, I'd find some comfort, that's what I would.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Comfort? Alas; there is none for me.

MUSLIN.

And whose fault then?——Would any body but you——it provokes me to think of it——Would any but you,——young, handsome, with wit, graces, talents, would any body, with so many accomplishments,

30 THE WAY TO KEEP HIM,

ments, sit at home here, as melancholy as a poor servant out of place?—And all for what? For a husband? And such a husband! What do you think the world will say of you, Ma'am?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I care not what they say. I am tired of the world, and the world may be tired of me, if it will. My troubles are to myself only, and I must endeavour to bear them. Who knows what patience may do? If Mr. Lovemore has any feeling left, my conduct and his own heart may one day incline him to do me justice.

MUSLIN.

But, dear Ma'am, that's waiting for dead men's shoes. Incline him to do you justice!—What signifies expecting and expecting? Give me a bird in the hand. If all the women in London, who happen to be in your case, were to sit down, and die of the spleen, what would become of the public places? They might turn Vauxhall to a hop-garden; make a brewhouse of Ranelagh, and let both the Playhouses to a methodist-preacher. We should not have the racketting we have now. John, let the horses be put to—John, go to my Lady Trump-about, and invite her to a small party of twenty or thirty card tables.—John, run to my Lady Catgut, and let her know I'll wait upon her Ladyship to the Opera--- John, run as fast as ever you can, with my compliments to Mr. Varney, and tell him it will be the death of me, if I have not a box for the new play.--- Lord blefs you, Ma'am, they rantipole it about this town, with as unconcerned looks, and as florid out-fides, as if they were treated at home like so many goddesses; though every body knows possession has un-

ungoddeffed them all long ago, and their husbands care no more for them, no, by Jingo, no more than they do for their husbands.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

At what a rate you run on?

MUSLIN.

It is enough to make a body run on. If every body thought like you, Ma'am——

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

If every body loved like me!

MUSLIN.

A brags thimble for love, if it is not returned by love. What the deuce is here to do? Love for love is something: but to love alone, where's the good of that? Shall I go and fix my heart upon a man, who shall despise me for that very reason? And, ay, says he, "Poor fool! I see she adores me. The woman's well enough, only she has one inconvenient circumstance about her; I am married to her, and marriage is the devil."

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Will you have done?

MUSLIN.

I have not half done, Ma'am. And when the vile man goes a rogueing, he smiles impudently in your face, "and I am going to the chocolate house, my dear; amuse yourself in the mean time, my love." Fy upon 'em; I know 'em all. Give me a husband
that

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that will enlarge the circle of my innocent pleasures; but a husband now a days, is no such a thing. A husband now is nothing but a scare-crow, to shew you the fruit, but touch it if you dare. The devil's in 'em, the Lord forgive me for swearing. A husband is a mere bugbear, a snap-dragon, a monster; that is to say, if one makes him so, then he is a monster indeed; and if one does not make him so, then he behaves like a monster; and of the two evils, by my troth——But here, Ma'am, here comes one who can tell you all about it. Here comes Sir Brilliant: ask his advice, Ma'am.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

His advice?——Ask advice of the man, who has estranged Mr. Lovemore's affections from me?

MUSLIN.

Well I protest and vow, I think Sir Brilliant a very pretty gentleman. He is the very pink of the fashion. He dresses fashionably, lives fashionably, wins your money fashionably, loses his own fashionably, and does every thing fashionably; and then he looks so lively, and so much to say, and so never at a loss!——but here he comes.

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Mrs. Lovemore, my dear Ma'am, always in a vis-a-vis party with your *suivante*?——Afford me your pardon, if I say this does a little wear the appearance of being out of humour with the world.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Far from it, Sir Brilliant. We were engaged in your panegyrick.

SIR BRILLIANT.

My panegyrick? Then am I come most apropos to give the portrait a few finishing touches. Mr. Lovemore, as soon as he is dressed, will wait upon you: in the mean time, I can help you to some anecdotes, which will enable you to colour your canvass a little higher.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Among those anecdotes, I hope you will not omit the bright exploit of seducing Mr. Lovemore from all domestic happiness.

(She make a sign to MUSLIN to go)

SIR BRILLIANT.

I, Madam?—Let me perish if ever—

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Oh! Sir, I can make my observations.

SIR BRILLIANT.

May fortune eternally forsake me, and beauty frown on me, if I am conscious of any plot upon earth.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Don't assert too strongly, Sir Brilliant.

SIR BRILLIANT.

May I never throw a winning cast—

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

It is in vain to deny it, Sir.

SIR BRILLIANT.

May I lose the next sweepstakes, if I have ever, in thought, word or deed, been accessory to his infidelity. I alienate the affections of Mr. Lovemore! Consider, Madam, how would this tell in Westminster Hall? Sir Brilliant Fashion, what say you, guilty of this indictment or not guilty? Not guilty, poss. Thus issue is joined. You enter the court: but, my dear Madam, veil those graces that adorn your person: abate the fire of those charms: so much beauty will corrupt the judges: give me a fair trial.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

And thus you think to laugh it away.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Nay, hear me out. You appear in court: you charge the whole upon me, without a syllable as to the how, when, and where? No proof positive; the prosecution ends, and I begin my defence.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

And by playing these false colours you think I am to be amused?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Nay, Mrs. Lovemore, I am now upon my defence. Only hear.—You will please to consider, Gentlemen of the Jury, that Mr. Lovemore is not a minor, nor I his guardian. He loves gaiety, pleasure, and enjoyment:

joyment : is it my fault ? He is possessed of talents and a taste for pleasure, which he knows how to gratify : can I restrain him ? He knows the world, makes the most of life, and plucks the fruit that grows around him : am I to blame ? This is the whole affair.—How say you, Gentlemen of the Jury ? —Not Guilty. There, you see how it is. I have cleared myself.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Brisk, lively, and like yourself, Sir Brilliant ! But if you can imagine this bantering way—

SIR BRILLIANT.

Acquitted by my country, Ma'am ; fairly acquitted.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

After the very edifying counsel which you give to Mr. Lovemore, this loose strain is not in the least surprizing. And, Sir, your late project—

SIR BRILLIANT.

My late project !

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Your late project, Sir. Not content with leading Mr. Lovemore into a thousand scenes of dissipation, you have introduced him lately to your mistress Bellmour. You understand me, Sir.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Ma'am, he does not so much as know the Widow Bellmour.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Nay, Sir Brilliant, have a care: justify it if you can, or give it a turn of wit. There is no occasion to hazard yourself too far.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Falsehood I disdain, Madam, and I, Sir Brilliant Fashion, declare that Mr. Lovemore is not acquainted with the Widow Bellmour. And if he was, what then? Do you know the lady?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I know her, Sir? A person of that character?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Oh!—I see you don't know her: but I will let you into her whole history.—Pray be seated—you shall know her whole history, and then judge for yourself. The Widow Bellmour, Madam—

LOVEMORE. (*within*)

William, are the horses put to?

SIR BRILLIANT.

We are interrupted.

Enter LOVEMORE.

LOVEMORE.

Very well: let the carriage be brought round directly.—How do you do, my dear?—Sir Brilliant I beg your pardon.—My Love, you don't answer

swer me : how do you do this morning? (*with an air of cold civility*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

A little indisposed in mind : but indisposition of the mind is of no consequence : nobody pities it.

LOVEMORE.

I beg your pardon, Mrs. Lovemore. Indisposition of the mind—Sir Brilliant, that's a mighty pretty ring on your finger.

SIR BRILLIANT.

A bauble : will you look at it? (*gives the ring*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Though I have but few obligations to Sir Brilliant, I suppose I am to ascribe to him the favour of this visit, Mr. Lovemore.

LOVEMORE.

(*looking at the ring, and laughing*)

Now there you wrong me.—Your enquiries about my health have been very obliging this morning, and I came to return the compliment before I go out.—It is set very neatly. (*gives back the ring*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Are you going out, Sir?

LOVEMORE.

A matter of business—How I do hate business! —But business (*examining his ruffles*)—business must

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be done.—Pray is there any news?---Any news, my dear?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

It would be news to me, Sir, if you would be kind enough to let me know whether I may expect the favour of your company at dinner to-day.

LOVEMORE.

It would be impertinent in me to answer such a question, for I can give no direct answer to it.---I am the slave of events; just as things happen; perhaps I may; perhaps not. But don't let me be of any inconvenience to you. Is it material where a body eats?---Have you heard what happened to me?

(aside to SIR BRILLIANT.)

SIR BRILLIANT.

When and where?

LOVEMORE.

A word in your ear---with your permission, Ma'am?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

That cold, contemptuous civility, Mr. Lovemore---

LOVEMORE.

Po! prithee now, how can you?---that is very peevish, and very illnatured.—(*turning to SIR BRILLIANT*) I lost very thing I played for after you went. The foreigner and he understand one another.---I beg your pardon, Mrs. Lovemore; it was only about an affair at the Opera.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

The Opera or any thing is more agreeable than my company.

LOVEMORE.

Now there again you wrong me. (*to Sir BRILLIANT*) We dine at the St. Alban's.—How can you Mrs. Lovemore? I make it a point not to incommode you. You possibly may have some private party; and it would be unpolite in me to obstruct your schemes of pleasure. Would not it, Sir Brilliant?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Oh!—Gothick to the last degree!

LOVEMORE.

Very true; vulgar and mechanick! (*both stand laughing.*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Go on; make sport for yourselves, gentlemen.

LOVEMORE.

Ho! ho! ho! I am sore with laughing.—If you, Madam, have arranged an agreeable party, for me to be present, it would look as if we lived together like Sir Bashfull Constant and his Lady, who are always, like two Game-cocks, ready armed to goad and spur one another. Hey! Sir Brilliant?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Oh! the very thing: or like Sir Theodore Traffic
C 4 at

at Tunbridge taking his wife under the arm in the public rooms, and "come along home, I tell you."

LOVEMORE.

Exactly so. (*Both continue laughing.*) Odds my life! I shall be beyond my time (*looks at his watch*) any commands into the city, my dear?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Commands!—no, Sir, I have no commands.

LOVEMORE.

I have an appointment at my banker's. Sir Brilliant, you know old Discount?

SIR BRILLIANT.

He that was in Parliament, and had the large contract?

LOVEMORE.

The same: ENTIRE BUTT, I think, was the name of his Borough. Can I set you down?

SIR BRILLIANT.

No my carriage waits. I shall rattle half the town over presently.

LOVEMORE.

As you will. Sir Brilliant will entertain you, Ma'am. *Au revoir*, my love.—Sir Brilliant, yours.—Who waits there?

[*Exit singing.*]

SIR

SIR BRILLIANT.

Bon voyage.—You see, Madam, that I don't deprive you of his company.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Your influence is now unnecessary. It is grown habitual to him: he will drive to your Mrs. Bellmour, I suppose,

SIR BRILLIANT.

Apropos; that brings us back to the little history I was going to give you of that Lady. What is your charge against her? That she is amiable? Granted. Young, gay, rich, handsome, with enchanting talents, it is no wonder all the pretty fellows are on their knees to her. Her manner so entertaining! that quickness of transition from one thing to another! that round of variety! and every new attitude does so become her; and she has such a feeling heart, and with an air of giddiness so nice a conduct!

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Mighty well, Sir: she is a very vestal. Finish your portrait. A vestal from your school of painting must be a curiosity.—But how comes it, Sir, if she is this wonder, that your honourable proposals are at an end there?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Compulsion, Ma'am: it is not voluntary. My Lord Etheridge is the happy man. I thought he was out of the kingdom; but his lordship is with her

her ev'ry evening. I can scarce gain admittance ; and so all that remains for me, is to do justice to the lady, and console myself in the best way I can for the insufficiency of my pretensions.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

And am I to believe all this ?

SIR BRILLIANT.

May the first woman I pay my addresses to, strike me to the centre with a supercilious eyebrow, if every syllable is not minutely true.—So that you see, I am not the cause of your inquietude.—There is not in the world a person, who more earnestly aspires to prove the tender esteem he bears you.—I have long panted for an opportunity ---by all that's soft she listens to me (*aside*)---I have long panted, Ma'am, for a tender moment like this--.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

(*looking gravely at him*)

Sir !

SIR BRILLIANT.

I have panted with all the ardour, which charms like your's must kindle in every heart—

Mrs. LOVEMORE. (*walks away*)

This liberty, Sir—

SIR BRILLIANT.

Consider, Madam : we have both cause of discontent ; both disappointed ; both crossed in love ;
and

and the least we can do is both to join, and sweeten each other's cares.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

And your friend, Sir, who has just left you—

SIR BRILLIANT.

He, Madam, for a long time—I have seen it, with vexation seen it,—yes, he has long been false to honour, love, and you.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Sir Brilliant, I have done. You take my wrongs too much to heart, Sir—(*rings a bell*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

“Those eyes that tell us what the fun is made of;
“Those hills of driven snow!”---

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Will nobody answer there?

Enter MUSLIN.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Madam, I desist: when you are in better humour, recollect what I have said. Your adorer takes his leave. Sir Brilliant, mind your hits, and her strait-laced virtue will surrender at last. Madam---

[*Bows respectfully; Exit.*]

MUSLIN.

As I live and breathe, Ma'am, if I was as you, I would not fluster myself about it.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

About what?

MUSLIN.

What signifies mincing the matter? I heard it all.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You did? did you? (*looks angrily*)

MUSLIN.

Ma'am!

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Impertinence! (*walks about*) Oh! Mr. Lovemore!---To make his character public, and render him the topick of every tea-table throughout this town: I must avoid that.

MUSLIN.

What the deuce is here to do?---An unman-
nerly thing, for to go for to huff me in this manner!
(*aside*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

That would only widen the breach, and instead of neglect, might call forth resentment, and settle at last into a fixed aversion: lawyers, parting, and separate maintenance!---What must be done?

MUSLIN.

What is she thinking of now?---A fulky thing,
not

not to be more familiar with such a friend as I am.
 ---Did you speak to me, Ma'am?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

It may succeed: suppose I try it--Muslin.

MUSLIN.

Ma'am. (*running to her*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You heard Sir Brilliant say that Mr. Lovemore is not acquainted with the Widow?

MUSLIN.

Lard, Ma'am, he is as full of tricks as a French milliner. I know he does visit there: I know it from William. I'll be hanged in my own garters, if he does not.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I know not what to do. Let my chair be got ready.

MUSLIN.

Your chair, Ma'am!--Are you going out?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Let me hear no more questions: do as I order you. [*Exit.*]

MUSLIN.

Which way is the wind now? No matter; she does not know what she'd be at. If she would but take my advice,--go abroad, visit every where, see the

the world, throw open her doors, give balls, assemblies, concerts; sing, dance, dress, spend all her money, run in debt, ruin her husband; there would be some sense in that: the man would stay at home then to quarrel with her. She would have enough of his company. But no; mope, mope for ever; heigho! tease, tease; Muslin, step to William; where's his master? When did he come home? How long has he been up? A fine life truly!--I love to be in the fashion, for my part. Bless me, I had like to have forgot. Mrs. Marmalet comes to my rout to night. She might as well stay away: she is nothing but meer lumber. The formal thing won't play higher than shilling whist. How the devil does she think I can make a shilling party for her? There is no such a thing now a days: no body plays shilling whist now, unless I was to invite the trades-people: but I shan't let myself down for Madam Marmalet, that I promise her.

End of the FIRST ACT.

A C T

A C T the S E C O N D.

*Scene an Apartment at SIR BASHFULL CONSTANT'S.**Enter SIR BASHFULL.*

SIR BASHFULL.

DID not I hear a rap at the door? Yes, yes, I did; I am right. The carriage is just now driving away. Who answers there? Sideboard; step hither, Sideboard. I must know who it is: my wife keeps the best company in England. Hold, I must be wary. Servants love to pry into their masters secrets.

Enter SIDEBOARD.

SIR BASHFULL.

Whose carriage was that at the door?

SIDEBOARD.

The Dutcheſs of Hurricane, your honour.

SIR BASHFULL.

The Dutcheſs of Hurricane? (*Walks aſide and ſmiles*) A woman of great rank!—what did ſhe want?

SIDEBOARD.

She has left this card for my Lady.

SIR BRILLIANT.

A card? Let me ſee it. (*Reads.*) *The Dutcheſs of*

of Hurricane presents compliments to Lady Constant. She has left the bounds and the foxes, and the brutes, that gallop after them; to their own dear society for the rest of the winter, Her Grace keeps Wednesdays at Hurricane-House for the rest of the winter.---Make me thankful, here's a card from a Dutcheffs !---what have you there?

SIDEBOARD.

A parcel of cards, that have been left here this morning.

SIR BASHFULL.

All these in one morning? (*looks at them*) Why I may as well keep an Inn; may as well keep the Coach and Horses in Piccadilly. (*reads fast*) *Lady Riot---Mrs. Allnight---The Dutcheffs of Carmine---look ye there, another Dutcheffs! Lady Basset---Lord Pleurisie---the Countess of Ratifie---Sir Richard Lungs---Lord Laudanum---Sir Charles Valerian---Lady Hectick---Lady Mary Gabble---I can't bear all this, Sideboard --(aside and smiling) I cant bear the pleasure of it: all people of tip-top condition to visit my wife!*

Enter FURNISH.

SIR BASHFULL.

What's the matter, Furnish?

FURNISH.

The mattter, Sir ?---Nothing's the matter.

SIR BASHFULL.

What are you about? Where are you going?
What have you to do now?

FUR-

FURNISH.

Only to tell the chairmen they must take Black George with his flambeau with them this evening, and carry the chair to pay visits for my lady.

SIR BASHFULL.

An empty chair to pay visits!—what polite ways people of fashion have got of being intimate with each other!—(*aside*) absurd as it is, I am glad to see my wife keep pace with the best of them. I laugh at it, and yet I like it.—Wounds! I shall be found out by my servants.—I tell you, Sideboard, and you Mrs. Busy Body, that your Mistress leads a life of noise and hurry, and cards and dice, and vanity, and nonsense, and I am resolved to bear it no longer.---Don't I hear her coming?

FURNISH.

My lady is coming, Sir.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside and smiling*)

She looks charmingly.---Now I'll tell her roundly a piece of my mind. You shall see who commands in this house.

Enter LADY CONSTANT.SIR BASHFULL. (*steals a look*)

I could almost give up the point when I look at her.—So, madam, I have had my house full of duns again to day.

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D

LADY

LADY CONSTANT.

Obliging creatures, to call so often. What did they want?

SIR BASHFULL.

Want!—what should they want but money?

LADY CONSTANT.

And you paid them, I suppose.

SIR BASHFULL.

You suppose!—'sdeath, madam, what do you take me for?

LADY CONSTANT.

I took you for a husband: my brother prescribed you. But his prescription has done me no good.

SIR BASHFULL.

Nor me either: I have had a bitter pill of it.

LADY CONSTANT.

But the pill was gilded for you. My fortune, I take it, has paid off the old family mortgage on your estate.

SIR BASHFULL.

And at the rate you go on, a new mortgage will swallow up my estate.---I see you are an ungratefull woman.

LADY CONSTANT.

That is, as you keep the account.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

And my accounts will shew it. Day after day nothing but extravagance to gratify your vanity. Did not I go into parliament to please you? Did not I go down to the Borough of *Smoke-and-Sot*, and get drunk there for a whole month together? Did not I get mobbed at the George and Vulture? And pelted and horfewhipped the day before the election? And was not I obliged to steal out of the town in a rabbit-cart? And all this to be somebody as you call it? Did not I stand up in the house to make a speech to shew what an Orator you had married? And did not I expose myself? Did I know whether I stood upon my head or my heels for half an hour together? And did not a great man from the Treasury-bench tell me never to speak again?

LADY CONSTANT.

And why not take his advice?

SIR BASHFULL.

What in the name of common sense had to I do in Parliament? My country! what's my country to me? The debts of the nation, and your gaming debts are nothing to me. I must help to pay both, must I? I can vote against taxes, and I can advertise in the Gazette to secure me from your extravagance. I have not lived in the Temple for nothing.

FURNISH.

He slept there, and calls it studying the law.

SIR BASHFULL.

Hold you your tongue, Mrs. Pert: leave the room. Go both about your business.

[*Exeunt* FURNISH and SIDEBBOARD.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

I have kept it up before my servants. (*Looks at Lady Constant*) She is a fine woman after all.

LADY CONSTANT.

Is there never to be an end of this usage, Sir? Am I to be for ever made unhappy by your humours.

SIR BASHFULL.

Humours! good sense and sound judgement, in the fine lady's dictionary, are to be called humours?

LADY CONSTANT.

And your humours are now grown insupportable.

SIR BASHFULL.

Your profusion is insupportable. At the rate you go on, how am I to find money for my next election? ---If you would but talk this matter over coolly--- She talks like an angel, and I wish I could say (*aside*) the same of myself.---What will the world think?--- Only command your temper---what will they think, if I am seen to encourage your way of life?

LADY CONSTANT.

Amuse yourself that way, Sir.---Avoid one error, and run into the opposite extreme.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

There; a translation from Horace—*Dum vitant
Stulti vitia*—She is a notable woman.

LADY CONSTANT.

Let me tell you, there is not in life a more ridiculous fight than the person, who guards, with imaginary wisdom, against one gyant-vice, and leaves himself open to a million of absurdities.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

I am nothing to her in an argument—she has a tongue that can reason me out of my senses.—I could almost find it in my heart to tell her the whole truth.—You know, my Lady Constant, that when you want any thing in reason—

LADY CONSTANT.

Is it unreasonable to live with decency? Is it unreasonable to keep the company my rank and education have entitled me to? Is it unreasonable to conform to the modes of life, when your fortune can so well afford it?

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

She is a very reasonable woman, and I wish I had but half her sense.—You know I am good natured in the main, and if a sum of money within a moderate compass—If a brace of hundreds—(*aside*) why should not I make it three?—I know that you have contracted habits of life, and (*in a softened tone*) habit, I know is not easily conquered: and if three (*smiling*) hundred pounds will prevent disputes, why

why (*smiling*) as to the matter of three hundred pounds——

Enter FURNISH, with a band box.

FURNISH.

Your Ladyship's things from the milliner's.

SIR BASHFULL.

Death and fury! this woman has overheard me: Three hundred pounds, madam! (*in a violent passion*) let me tell you that three hundred pounds ---what right have you to shovel away three hundred pounds?

LADY CONSTANT.

Why does the man fly out into such a passion?

SIR BASHFULL.

I will allow no such doings in my house. Don't I often come when my hall is besieged with a parcel of powder-monkey servants? And did not I the other day, before I could get into my own doors, entangle myself among the chairmen's poles, and was not I confined there, like a man in the stocks?

LADY CONSTANT.

Why would you be so awkward?

SIR BASHFULL.

An eternal scene of routs and drums. Have not I seen you put the fee simple of a score of my best acres upon a single card? And have not I muttered to myself, if that woman was as much in love with
me

me as she is with PAM, what an excellent wife she would make?

LADY CONSTANT.

PAM is very obliging: why wont you strive to be as agreeable?

SIR BASHFULL.

'Sdeath, Madam, you are so fond of play that I should not wonder to see my next child marked on the forehead with a pair royal of aces.

FURNISH.

I am fure you deserve to be marked on the forehead with a pair of——

SIR BASHFULL.

Malapert huffey! do you meddle? Begone this moment.

[Exit FURNISH.

LADY CONSTANT.

Fy upon it, Sir Bashfull! I am tired of blushing for you.

SIR BASHFULL.

I am afraid I have gone too far: she is ashamed of me. (*aside*)

LADY CONSTANT.

You agreed to a seperation the other day, and there remains nothing but to execute articles, and make an end of all this disquiet.

SIR BASHFULL.

A seperate maintenance will go but a little way to answer the bawling of Milliners, Mercers, Jewellers, and gaming debts.

LADY CONSTANT.

It will purchase content, and nothing can obtain that under your roof.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

I have shot my bolt too far---I fancy, my Lady Constant, that you don't know me. We might explain matters, and---'fdeath! (*aside*) I am going to blab---I say, madam, if you understood me rightly---as to the authority of a husband, I might perhaps be brought to give it up, in part at least; and if no body was the wiser, I might connive---Po! confusion! interrupted again by that---

Enter FURNISH.

FURNISH.

A fervant from Mrs. Lovemore, Madam, to know---

SIR BASHFULL.

The authority of a husband I never will give up---

LADY CONSTANT.

A storm, a whirlwind is fitter to converse with.

SIR BASHFULL.

will storm like a whirlwind in my own house. I
have

have done, Madam; you are an ungovernable woman---(*aside and smiling*) she is a charming woman, and if nobody saw it, I would let her govern me with all my heart.

[*Exit.*

LADY CONSTANT.

Did any body ever see such behaviour?

FURNISH.

Never, and how your ladyship bears it, I can't tell.

LADY CONSTANT.

That it should be my fate to be married to such a quicksand! What does Mrs. Lovemore say?

FURNISH.

If your ladyship will be at home, she intends to do herself the pleasure of waiting upon you, Madam.

LADY CONSTANT.

Very well; I shall be at home. Upon recollection, I want to see her. Let the servant wait: I'll write an answer.

[*Exit.*

Scene another Apartment.

Enter SIR BASHFULL and LOVEMORE.

SIR BASHFULL.

Walk in, Mr. Lovemore, walk in. I am heartily glad to see you. This is kind.

LOVE

LOVEMORE.

I am ready, you see, to attend the call of friendship.

SIR BASHFULL.

Mr. Lovemore, you are a friend indeed.

LOVEMORE.

You do me honour, Sir Bashfull. And your lady, how does she do?

SIR BASHFULL.

Perfectly well: In great spirits. (*smiling at Lovemore*) I never saw her look better: but we have had t'other skirmish since I saw you.

LOVEMORE.

Another!

SIR BASHFULL.

Ay, another; and I did not bate her an ace. She is a rare one to argue. She is fit to discuss a point with any man.—No body like her. Wit at will; I thought I managed the dispute, and that I should soon have had her at a what you call a *non-plus*. But no, no; no such thing. She can give you a sharp turn in a moment.

LOVEMORE.

Ay!

SIR BASHFULL.

Give her her due, I am nothing to her. I thought
I had

I had her fast, but she went round me, quick as lightening; and would you believe it? (*looks highly pleased*) She did not leave me a word to say.

LOVEMORE.

Well! that was hard upon you.

SIR BASHFULL.

No, not hard at all. Those little victories I don't mind. You know I told you I have something for your private ear. Have you observed nothing odd and singular in me?

LOVEMORE.

Not in the least. In the whole circle of my acquaintance I know no body so little tinged with oddity.

SIR BASHFULL.

What, have you seen nothing? (*laughs*) Have you remarked nothing particular in regard to my wife?

LOVEMORE.

Why, you don't live happy with her: but that is not a singular case.

SIR BASHFULL.

But I tell you—this must be in confidence—I am at the bottom a very odd fellow.

LOVEMORE.

You do yourself injustice, Sir Bashfull.

SIR BASHFULL.

No, not in the least. It is too true—I am in the
main

60 THE WAY TO KEEP HIM,

main a very odd fellow ; I am indeed ; as odd a fish as lives ; and you must have seen it before now.

LOVEMORE.

I see it ?—I am not apt to spy defects in my friends. What can this be ? You are not jealous, I hope.

SIR BASHFULL.

You have not hit the right nail on the head. No, not jealous. Do her justice, I am safe as to that point. My lady has high notions of honour. No, it is not that.

LOVEMORE.

Not a ray of light to guide me : explain, Sir Bashfull.

SIR BASHFULL. (*smiling at him*)

You could never have imagined it. But first let me shut this door.

LOVEMORE.

What whim has got possession of him now ?

SIR BASHFULL.

Mr. Lovemore, I have great dependance upon you. I am going to make a discovery---I blush at the very thought of it (*Turns away*).

LOVEMORE.

Be a man, Sir Bashfull ; out with it at once ; let me advise you.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

The very thing I want. The affair is—but then if he should betray me!—Mr. Lovemore, I doubt you, and yet esteem you. Some men there are, who, when a confidence is reposed in them, take occasion from thence to hold a hank over their friend, and tyrannize him all the rest of his days.

LOVEMORE.

O fy ! this is ungenerous. True friendship is of another quality: It feels from sympathy; honour is the active principle; and the strictest secrecy is an inviolable rule.

SIR BASHFULL.

Mr. Lovemore, I have no further doubt—stay; did not you hear a noise?—Don't I see a shadow moving under the bottom of that door? (*goes to the door*)

LOVEMORE.

What has got into his head?

SIR BASHFULL (*Looking out.*)

Servants have a way of listening.

LOVEMORE.

Rank jealousy! he has it through the very brain!

SIR BASHFULL.

No, no; all's safe. Mr. Lovemore, I will make you the depositary,—the faithful depositary of a secret: let it pass from the bottom of my heart to the inmost recess of yours: there let it rest concealed from every

every prying eye.—My inclination—There;—I see a laugh already forming in every feature of your face.

LOVEMORE.

Then my face is no true index of the mind. Were you to know the agitations in which you keep me by this suspense—

SIR BASHFULL.

I believe it. To make an end at once, my inclinations are totally changed—no; not changed; but they are not what they seemed to be. Love is the passion that possesses me.—I am in love, and—(*turns from him*) and I am ashamed of myself.

LOVEMORE.

Ashamed! Love is a noble passion: but don't let me hear any more about it. Lady Constant will discover all, and then the blame will fall on me. If your heart revolts from her, don't let me be thought in league with you. You need not involve me in a quarrel with her ladyship.

SIR BASHFULL.

You don't take me right. You are wide, quite wide of the mark. Hear me out.

LOVEMORE.

No, no more. You must excuse me.

SIR BASHFULL.

You shall hear me. The object of my passion, this charming woman, whom I doat on to distraction—

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Your pardon; I won't hear it---(*walks away from him*) When her ladyship hears of his gallantry, the devil is in the dice, if the spirit of revenge does not mould her to my purposes.

SIR BASHFULL. (*following Lovemore*)

I say, Mr. Lovemore, this adorable creature——

LOVEMORE.

Keep your secret, Sir Bashfull, (*avoiding him*)

SIR BASHFULL. (*following him*)

Who looks so lovely in my eyes——

LOVEMORE.

Well; I don't desire to know her.

SIR BASHFULL.

You do know her. (*following him*) This idol of my heart,---is my own wife.

LOVEMORE (*stares at him*)

Your own wife?

SIR BASHFULL.

Yes, my own wife. (*looks silly, and turns away*)
It's all over with me: I am undone.

LOVEMORE.

This is the most unexpected discovery.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Look ye there now; he laughs at me already.

LOVEMORE. (*aside*)

His wife must not know this. The grass is cut under my feet if she ever hears a word of it.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

He is struck with amazement, and does not say a word to me.

LOVEMORE. (*aside*)

I must not encourage him.---And can this be possible, Sir Bashfull?---In love with your own wife!

SIR BASHFULL.

Spare my confusion. I have made myself very ridiculous. (*Looks at him, and turns away*) I know I have.

LOVEMORE.

Ridiculous? Far from it. Can it be wrong to love a valuable woman? Not to feel the impressions of beauty and of merit were downright insensibility; but then we should always admire with discretion. The folly of us married men consists, in letting our wives perceive the vehemence, with which we love; and the consequence is, we are enslaved for the rest of our lives.---I could trust you with a secret, which perhaps, would keep you in countenance. Could you imagine it? I love my wife.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

How?

LOVEMORE.

I am in love with my wife.

SIR BASHFULL.

Oh! no, no;---hey! (*looking highly pleased*) you make me laugh. You don't love her, do you?

LOVEMORE.

Passionately; tenderly; with all the ardour of affection.

SIR BASHFULL.

Give me your hand. Ha! ha!---I did not expect this. This is some relief. Ha! ha!---you have made me happy. And have you led the life you have done all this time, on purpose to conceal your regard from her?

LOVEMORE.

For that very purpose. I esteem her; I love her; but I would not have her know it.

SIR BASHFULL.

No?

LOVEMORE.

Upon no consideration, nor would I have the world know it.

SIR BASHFULL.

Perfectly right.

LOVEMORE.

To be sure. Tell your wife that you esteem her good qualities, and admire her person, she cries VICTORIA, falls to plundering, and then you must either break her chain, or wear it in the face of the world, a laughing stock for all your acquaintance.

SIR BASHFULL.

That is what I have always been afraid of.

LOVEMORE.

Not without reason. The world delights in ridicule. Do you know, if our secrets were to transpire, that we should have nothing but wit, raillery, and fleers, and taunts, flying about our ears?

SIR BASHFULL.

But I have taken good care. I have quarrelled with my lady ten times a day on purpose to cloak the affair, and prevent all suspicion.

LOVEMORE.

Admirable! I commend your prudence. Besides, —my Lady Constant, you know, has some youthful vigour about her; a graceful person, and an eye that inflames desire; and desire at your time of life, you know——

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Po! it is not for that; that is nothing. I wear admirably well, Mr. Lovemore.

LOVEMORE.

Do you?

SIR BASHFULL.

As young as ever: but I don't let her know it.

LOVEMORE.

Well! if you are discreet in that point, you are a very Machiavel!

SIR BASHFULL.

Yes, yes; I fight cunning. (*laughs*)

LOVEMORE.

Let nothing betray you. Be upon your guard: that is my own plan exactly. You want no advice from me.

SIR BASHFULL.

Pardon me: you can assist me.—My dear brother sufferer, give me your hand. We can, in a sly way be of great use to each other.

LOVEMORE.

As how?

SIR BASHFULL.

I'll tell you. There are some things which you know our wives expect to be done.

LOVEMORE.

So there are.—(*aside*) What the devil is he at now?

SIR BASHFULL.

Now if you will assist me——

LOVEMORE.

You may depend upon my assistance.

SIR BASHFULL.

Thus it is : my wife, you know, keeps a power of company, and makes a great figure there. I could shew her in any company in England : I wish she could say the same of me.

LOVEMORE.

Why truly I wish she could.

SIR BASHFULL.

But that's out of the question. Now if you will come into my scheme—It must be a deep secret——How? Is that Sir Brilliant's voice?

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bashfull, you see what attraction you have. Lovemore, I did not expect to see you here.

LOVEMORE.

Nor did I expect you, Sir Brilliant. (*aside*)

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Confusion!—This unseasonable visit—(*aside*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

And your lady, is she at home, Sir Bashfull?

SIR BASHFULL.

Her own people keep that account, Sir: I know nothing of her.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Nay, never talk flightingly of a lady, who possesses so many elegant accomplishments. She has spirit, sense, wit and beauty.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

Spirit, sense, wit and beauty! she has them all, sure enough.---Sir, I am no sworn appraiser to take an inventory of her effects.---(*aside*) Hey, Lovemore? (*looks at him and laughs*)

LOVEMORE. (*to Sir Bashfull*)

Vastly well!

SIR BRILLIANT.

Is her ladyship visible this morning?

SIR BASHFULL.

Whether she is visible or not, is no business of mine, but I know she is unintelligible this morning, and incomprehensible this morning. She has the vapours; but your conversation I suppose will brighten her up for the rest of the day.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Why, as it happens, I have the rarest piece of news to communicate to her. Lovemore, you know Sir Amorous la Fool?

LOVEMORE.

He that was Sheriff the other day? Came up with an address, and got himself knighted?

SIR BRILLIANT.

The same. He declared he would live with his friends upon the same familiar footing as before, and his new dignities should make no alteration.

SIR BASHFULL.

I have seen the Knight. What of him?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Poor devil. He is in such a scrape!

SIR BASHFULL.

What's the matter? Bubbled at play, I suppose.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Worse, much worse.

LOVEMORE.

He has been blackballed at one of the clubs?

SIR BASHFULL.

Or run through the body in a duel?

SIR

SIR BRILLIANT.

Why that's a scrape indeed : but it is not that.

SIR BASHFULL.

What then ?

SIR BRILLIANT.

So unfortunate a discovery ! he is fallen in love—
I cannot help laughing at him.

LOVEMORE.

Po ! fallen in love with some coquette, who plays
off her airs, and makes a jest of him.

SIR BASHFULL.

A young actress may be, or an opera singer ?

SIR BRILLIANT.

No, you will never guess. Sir Bashfull,—like a
filly devil, he is fallen in love with his own wife.

SIR BASHFULL.

Fallen in love with his own wife ! (*stares at him*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

Yes ; he has made up all quarrels ; his jealousy is
at end, and he is to be upon his good behaviour for the
rest of his life.—Could you expect this, Lovemore ?

LOVEMORE.

No, Sir ; neither I nor my friend Sir Bashfull ex-
pected this.

SIR BASHFULL.

It is a stroke of surprize to me. (*Looking uneasy*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

I heard it at my Lady Betty Scandal's, and we had such a laugh: the whole company were in astonishment: whist stood still; quadrille laid down the cards, and brag was in suspense. Poor Sir Amorous! it is very ridiculous, is not it, Sir Bashfull?

SIR BASHFULL.

Very ridiculous indeed.---(*aside*) My own case exactly, and my friend Lovemore's too.

SIR BRILLIANT.

The man is lost, undone, ruined, dead and buried.

LOVEMORE. (*laughing*)

He will never be able to shew his face after this discovery.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Oh, never; it's all over with him. Sir Bashfull, this does not divert you; you don't enjoy it.

SIR BASHFULL.

Who I?---I---I---nothing can be more pleasant, and---I---I laugh as heartily as I possibly can. (*forcing a laugh.*)

SIR

SIR BRILLIANT.

Lovemore, you remember Sir Amorous used to strut, and talk big, and truly he did not care a pinch of snuff for his wife, not he; pretended to be as much at ease as Sir Bashfull about his lady, and as much his own master as you yourself, or any man of pleasure about town.

LOVEMORE.

I remember him: but as to Sir Bashfull and myself, we know the world; we understand life.

SIR BASHFULL.

So we do; the world will never have such a story of us. Will they Lovemore?

LOVEMORE.

Oh! we are free: we are out of the scrape.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Amorous la Fool will be a proverb. Adieu for him the side-box whisper, the soft assignation, and all the joys of freedom. He is retired with his Penelope, to love one another in the country; and next winter they will come to town, to hate one another.

SIR BASHFULL.

Do you think it will end so?

SIR BRILLIANT.

No doubt of it. That is always the denouement of modern matrimony. But I have not told you the worst of his case. Our friend Sir Charles Wildfire, you know, was writing a comedy, and what do you think he has done? He has drawn the character of Sir Amorous, and made him the hero of the play.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

What put him into a comedy?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Even so : it is called “ The Amorous Husband ;
“ or, The Man in Love with his own Wife.” Oh !
ho ! ho ! ho !

LOVEMORE.

We must send in time for places.

(laughs with Sir Brilliant)

SIR BASHFULL.

Lovemore carries it with an air. *(aside)*

SIR BRILLIANT.

Yes, we must secure places. Sir Bashfull, you
shall be of the party.

SIR BASHFULL.

The party will be very agreeable. I shall enjoy
the joke prodigiously. Ha ! ha ! *(forces a laugh)*

LOVEMORE.

Yes, Sir Bashfull, we shall relish the humour.
(looks at him and laughs)

SIR BRILLIANT.

The play will have a run : the people of fashion
will crowd after such a character.—I must drive to a
million of places and put it about ; but first, with
your leave, Sir Bashfull, I will take the liberty to
give

give a hint of the affair to your lady. It will appear so ridiculous to her!

SIR BASHFULL.

Do you think it will?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Without doubt: she has never met with any thing like it: has she, Lovemore?

LOVEMORE.

I fancy not: Sir Bashfull, you take care of that.

SIR BASHFULL.

Yes, yes; I shall never be the town-talk.—Hey, Lovemore?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Well, I'll step and pay my respects to my Lady Constant. Poor Sir Amorous! he will have his horns added to his coat of arms in a little time. Ha! ha!

[Exit.

SIR BASHFULL.

There, you see how it is. I shall get lampooned, be-rhymed, and niched into a comedy.

LOVEMORE.

Po! never be frightened at this. Nobody knows of your weakness but myself, and I can't betray your secret for my own sake.

SIR BASHFULL.

Very true.

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

This discovery shews the necessity of concealing our loves. We must act with caution. Give my Lady no reason to suspect that you have the least regard for her.

SIR BASHFULL.

Not for the world.

LOVEMORE.

Keep to that.

SIR BASHFULL.

I have done her a thousand kindnesses, but all by stealth ; all in a fly way.

LOVEMORE.

Have you?

SIR BASHFULL.

Oh ! a multitude. I'll tell you.—She has been plaguing me a long time for an addition to her jewels. She wants a diamond cross, and a better pair of diamond buckles. Madam, says I, I will have no such trumpery ; but then goes I and bespeaks them of the first jeweller in town.—All under the rose. The buckles are finished : worth five hundred ! She will have them this very day, without knowing from what quarter they come.—I can't but laugh at the contrivance—the man that brings them, will run away directly, without saying a word.

(laughs heartily)

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Sly, fly.—You know what you are about.

SIR BASHFULL.

Ay, let me alone——(*laughs with Lovemore*) And then, to cover the design still more, when I see her wear her baubles, I can take occasion to be as jealous as bedlam.

LOVEMORE.

So you can: ha! ha! ---(*aside*) I wish he may never be jealous of me in good earnest.

SIR BASHFULL.

Give me your hand. (*Looks at him and laughs*) I am safe I think.

LOVEMORE. (*laughing with him*)

Perfectly safe---(*aside*). if it was not for his own folly.

SIR BASHFULL.

But I was telling you, Mr. Lovemore:---we can be of essential use to each other.

LOVEMORE.

As how pray?

SIR BASHFULL.

Why, my lady is often in want of money. It would be ridiculous in me to supply her. Now if you will take the money from me, and pretend to lend it to her, out of friendship, you know——

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Nothing can be better—(*aside*) Here is a fellow pimping for his own horns.—I shall be glad to serve you.

SIR BASHFULL.

I am for ever obliged to you—here, here; take it now—here it is in bank notes—one, two, three; there is three hundred—give her that, and tell her you have more at her service to morrow or next day, if her occasions require it.

LOVEMORE.

My good friend, to oblige you (*takes the money*) this is the rarest adventure!

SIR BASHFULL.

I'll do any thing for you in return.

LOVEMORE.

I shall have occasion for your friendship—that is to forgive me, if you find me out. (*aside*)

SIR BASHFULL.

Lose no time; step to her now—hold, hold; Sir Brilliant is with her.

LOVEMORE.

I can dismiss him. Rely upon my friendship: I will make her ladyship easy for you.

SIR BASHFULL.

It will be kind of you.

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

It shall be her own fault if I don't.

SIR BASHFULL.

A thousand thanks to you—well, is not this the rarest project?

LOVEMORE.

It is the newest way——of satisfying a man's wife!

SIR BASHFULL.

Ay! let this head of mine alone.

LOVEMORE. (*aside*)

Not if I can help it? Hush!---I hear Sir Brilliant; he is coming down stairs. I'll take this opportunity, and step to her ladyship now.

SIR BASHFULL.

Do so, do so.

LOVEMORE.

I am gone. (*aside*) Who can blame me now if I cuckold this fellow? [Exit.

SIR BASHFULL.

Prosper you, prosper you, Mr. Lovemore. Make me thankfull: he is a true friend. I don't know what I should do without him.

Enter

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bashfull, how have you managed this?

SIR BASHFULL.

I have no art, no management. What's the matter?

SIR BRILLIANT.

I don't know what you have done, but your lady laughs till she is ready to expire at what I have been telling her.

SIR BASHFULL.

And she thinks Sir Amorous la Fool an object of ridicule?

SIR BRILLIANT.

She does not give credit to a single syllable of the story. A man that loves his wife would be a Phoenix indeed! Such a thing might exist formerly, but in this polished age is no where to be found. That's her opinion of the matter.

SIR BASHFULL. (*laughs*)

A whimsical notion of her's! and so she thinks you may go about with a lanthorn to find a man that sets any value upon his wife?

SIR BRILLIANT.

You have managed to convince her of it. How the devil do you contrive to govern so fine a woman? I know several, without her pretensions, who have
long

long ago thrown of all restraint. You keep up your own dignity.

SIR BASHFULL.

Yes, I know what I am about.

SIR BRILLIANT.

You!—you are quite in the fashion.—Apropos; I fancy I shall want you to afford me your assistance. You know my Lady Charlotte Modelove? She has a taste for the Theatre: at Bell Grove-place she has an elegant stage, where her select friends amuse themselves now and then with a representation of certain comic pieces. We shall there act the new comedy, but we apprehend some difficulty in the arrangement of the several characters. Now you shall act Sir Amorous, and——

SIR BASHFULL.

I act, Sir?—I know nothing of the character.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Po! say nothing of that. In time you may reach the ridiculous absurdity of it, and play it as well as another.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

Confusion! he does not suspect, I hope—divert yourselves, Sir, as you may; but not at my expence I promise you.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Never be so abrupt. Who knows but Lady Constant may be the happy wife, the *Cara Sposa* of the

piece! and then, you in love with her, and she laughing at you for it, will give a zest to the humour, which everybody will relish in the most exquisite degree.

SIR BASHFULL.

Po! this is too much. You are very pleasant, but you won't easily get me to play the fool.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Well, consider of it. I shall be delighted to see my friend Sir Bashfull tied to his wife's apron-string, and with a languishing look melting away in admiration of her charms. Oh! ho! ho! ho!—adieu; à l'honneur; good morning, Sir Bashfull. [*Exit.*]

SIR BASHFULL.

I don't know what to make of all this: But there is no danger. As long as no body knows it, I may venture to love my wife. There will be no harm, while the secret is kept as close as night, concealed in tenfold darkness, from the wits and scoffers of the age.

Enter LOVEMORE.

SIR BASHFULL.

Well, well?—how have you managed?

LOVEMORE.

As I could wish: she is infinitely obliged to me, and will never forget the civility.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

A thousand thanks to you. I am not suspected?

LOVEMORE.

She has not a distant idea of you in this business. She was rather delicate at first, and hesitated, and thought it an indecorum to accept of money even from a friend. But that objection soon vanished. I told her it is but too visible that she is unfortunately yoked with a husband, whose humour will never be softened down to the least compliance with her inclinations.

SIR BASHFULL.

That was well said, and had a good effect, I hope.

LOVEMORE.

I hope so too.

SIR BASHFULL.

It helps to carry on the plot, you know.

LOVEMORE.

Admirably ; it puts things in the train I wish.

SIR BASHFULL.

And so, to cover the design, you gave me the worst of characters.

LOVEMORE.

I painted you in terrible colours.

SIR BASHFULL.

Do so allways, and she will never suspect me of being privy to any civility you may shew her.

LOVEMORE.

I would not have you know any thing of my being civil to her for the world. I have succeeded thus far. I talked a few musty sentences, such as, the person, who receives a civility, confers the obligation, and so with some reluctance she complied at last, and things are now upon the footing I would have them. —Death and fury! there comes my wife.

SIR BASHFULL.

Ay, and here comes my wife.

LOVEMORE.

What the devil brings her hither?

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

Now, now; now let me see how he will carry it before Mrs. Lovemore.—Walk in, madam! walk in Mrs. Lovemore.

Enter Mrs. LOVEMORE, and LADY CONSTANT, at opposite doors.

LADY CONSTANT:

Mrs. Lovemore, to see you abroad is a novelty indeed.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

As great perhaps as that of finding your ladyship at home. Mr. Lovemore, I did not expect to have the pleasure of meeting you.

LOVEMORE.

Then we are both agreeably surprized.

SIR BASHFULL.

Now mind how he behaves. (*aside*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I thought you were gone to you city-banker.

LOVEMORE.

And you find that you are mistaken. I have deferred it till the evening—(*aside*) 'Sdeath! to be teased in this manner.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

No, no; he won't drop the mask. (*Looks at Lady Constant*) She has touched the cash; I can see the bank-notes sparkling in her eyes.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

If you don't go into the city till the evening, may I hope for your company at dinner, Mr. Lovemore?

LOVEMORE.

The question is entertaining, but as it was settled this morning, I think it has lost the graces of novelty.

SIR BASHFULL.

He won't let her have the least suspicion of his regard. (*aside*)

LADY CONSTANT.

I dare say Mr. Lovemore will dine at home, if it conduces to your happiness, Ma'am; and Sir Bashfull, I take it, will dine at home for the contrary reason.

SIR BASHFULL.

Madam, I will dine at home, or I will dine abroad, for what reason I please, and it is my pleasure to give no reason for either.—Lovemore! (*looks at him and smiles*)

LOVEMORE (*aside to Sir Bashfull.*)

Bravo! what a blockhead it is?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

As you have your chariot at the door, Mr. Lovemore, if you have no objection, I will send away my chair, and you may do me the honour of a place in your carriage.

LOVEMORE.

The honour will be very great to me, but—so many places to call at.—If I had known this sooner—You had better keep your chair.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

Cunning! cunning! he would not be seen in his chariot

chariot with her for the world. He has more discretion than I have.

LADY CONSTANT.

Mrs. Lovemore, since you have at last ventured to come abroad, I hope you will think it a change for the better. You are too domestick. I shall expect now to see you often: and apropos, I am to have a rout to-morrow evening; if you will do me the honour of your company——

SIR BASHFULL.

A rout to-morrow evening! you have a rout every evening, I think. Learn of Mrs. Lovemore; imitate her example, and don't let me have your hurricane months all the year round in my house.—Hip! (*aside*) Lovemore, how do you like me?

LOVEMORE. (*aside* to Sir Bashfull)

You improve upon it every time. But I am loitering here as if I had nothing to do.—My Lady Constant, I have the honour to wish your ladyship a good morning. Sir Bashfull, your's.—Madam--- (*bows gravely to Mrs. Lovemore, hums a tune and Exit*)

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

He knows how to play the game. I'll try what I can do. Mrs. Lovemore, I have the honour to wish you a good morning. Madam--- (*bows gravely to Lady Constant, hums a tune, and Exit*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Two such husbands!

LADY CONSTANT.

As to my swain, I grant you: Mr. Lovemore is at least well-bred; he has an understanding, and may in time reflect. Sir Bashfull never qualifies himself with the smallest tincture of civility.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

If civility can qualify the draught, I must allow Mr. Lovemore to have a skilful hand. But there is no end of his projects. Every day opens a new scene. Another of his intrigues is come to light. I came to consult with your ladyship. I know you are acquainted with the widow Bellmour.

LADY CONSTANT.

The widow Bellmour? I know her perfectly well.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Not so well, perhaps, as you may imagine. She has thrown out the lure for my wild gallant, and in order to deceive me——

LADY CONSTANT.

My dear, you must be mistaken. Who tells you this?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Oh! I can trust to my intelligence. Sir Brilliant Fashion, by way of blind to me, has been this morning drawing so amiable a picture of the lady——

LADY

LADY CONSTANT.

Sir Brilliant's authority is not always the best, but in this point, you may trust to him.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

But when you have heard all the circumstances—

LADY CONSTANT.

Depend upon it, you are wrong. I know the widow Bellmour, Her turn of character, and way of thinking—

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Excuse me, Madam. You decide without hearing me.

LADY CONSTANT.

All scandal, take my word for it. However, let me hear your story. We'll adjourn to my dressing-room, if you will; and I promise to confute all you can say.—I would have you know the widow Bellmour: you will be in love with her.—My dear Madam, have not you a tinge of jealousy?—Beware of that malady. If you see things through that medium, I shall give you up;

That jaundice of the mind, whose colours strike
On friend and foe, and paint them all alike

End of the SECOND ACT.

A C T

A C T the T H I R D.

Scene, an Apartment at the Widow BELLMOUR's : several chairs, a toilette, a book-case, and a harpsichord disposed up and down.

MIGNIONET. *(putting things in order.)*

I Don't well know what to make of this same Lord Etheridge. He is coming here again to-day, I suppose : all this neatness, and all this care must be for him.—Well, it does not signify: *(arranging the chairs)* there is a pleasure in obeying Madam Bellmour. She is a sweet lady, that's the truth of it.--- 'Twere a pity any of these men, with their deceitfull arts, should draw her into a snare.---But she knows them all. They must rise early who can outwit her,
(settling the toilette)

Enter Mrs. BELLMOUR, reading.

*Oh ! blest with temper, whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow chearfull as to-day ;
She who can own a sister's charms, and bear
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear ;
That never answers till a husband cools,
And if she rules him, never shews the rules.*

Sensible, elegant Pope !

*Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most, when she obeys.*

(seems to read on)

MIG-

MIGNIONET.

Lord love my mistress! always so charming, so gay, and so happy!

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

These exquisite characters of women! they are a sort of painters gallery, where one sees the portraits of all one's acquaintance, and sometimes we see our own features too. Mignonet, put this book in its place.

MIGNIONET.

Yes, ma'am; and there's your toilet looks as elegant as hands can make it.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Does it? I think it does. You have some taste. Apropos, where is my new song?—Oh! here it is: I must make myself mistress of it (*plays upon the harpsichord and sings a little*) I believe, I have conquered it. (*rises and goes to her toilet*) This hair is always tormenting me, always in disorder: this lock must be for ever gadding out of its place. I must and will subdue it,---Do you know, Mignonet, that this is a very pretty song? It was writ by my Lord Etheridge. My Lord has a turn. (*sings a little*) I must be perfect before he comes. (*humms the tune*) Do you know that I think my Lord is one of those men, who may be endured?

MIGNIONET.

Yes, Ma'am, I know you think so.

Mrs.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Do you?

MIGNIONET.

And if I have any skill, Ma'am, you are not without a little partiality for his lordship.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Really? Then you think I like him perhaps. Do you think I like him? I don't well know how that is. Like him! no, not absolutely; it is not decided: and yet I don't know, if I had a mind to humour myself, and to give way a little to inclination, there is something here in my heart that would be busy, I believe.---The man has a softness of manner, a turn of wit, and does not want sentiment. Can I call it sentiment? Yes, I think I may. He has sentiment; and then he knows the manners, the usage of the world, and he points out the ridicule of things with so much humour!

MIGNIONET.

You'll be caught, Ma'am; I see that.---To be sure, my lord has a quality-air, and can make himself agreeable. But what of that? You know but very little of him. Is a man's character known in three or four week's time? (*Mrs. Bellmour hums a tune*) Do, my dear madam, mind what I say: I am at times very considerate. I make my remarks, and I see very plainly---Lord, ma'am, what am I doing? I am talking to you for your own good, and you are all in the air, and no more mind me, no, no more than if I was nothing at all.

Mrs. LOVEMORE. (*continues humming a tune*)

You talk wonderfully well upon the subject; but

as

as I know how the cards lie, and can play the best of the game; and as I have a song to amuse me, one is inclined to give musical nonsense the preference.

MIGNIONET.

I assure you, ma'am, I am not one of those servants, that bargain for their mistress's inclinations: but you are a going to take a leap in the dark. What does my Lord Etheridge mean, with his chair always brought into the hall, and the curtains close about his ears? Why does he not he come like himself, and not care who sees him? There's some mystery at the bottom, I'll be sworn there is; and so you'll find at last.—Dear heart, Ma'am! if you are determined not to listen, what signifies my living with you? At this rate, I am of no service to you.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

There;—I have conquered my song. (*runs to her glass*) How do I look to day? The eyes do well enough, I think.—And so Mignionet, you imagine I shall play the fool, and marry my Lord Etheridge?

MIGNIONET.

You have it through the very heart of you: I see that.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Do you?—I don't know what to say to it. Poor Sir Brilliant Fashion! if I prefer his rival, what will become of him?—I won't think about it.

Enter

Enter POMPEY.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

What the matter, Pompey ?

POMPEY.

A lady in a chair desires to know if your ladyship is at home ?

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Has the lady no name ?

POMPEY.

Yes ; I fancies she has, ma'am ; but she did not tell it.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

How awkward !—well, shew the lady up-stairs.

MIGNIONET.

Had not you better receive her in the drawing-room, ma'am ? I have not half done my business here.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Oh ! you have done very well. There will be less formality here. I dare say it is some intimate acquaintance, though that foolish boy does not recollect her name.—Here she comes. I don't know her.

Enter Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Mrs. LOVEMORE. (*disconcerted*)

I beg pardon for this intrusion.

Mrs.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Pray walk in, ma'am. Mignonet, reach a chair.
(*Mrs. Lovemore crosses the stage, and they salute each other with an air of distant civility*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I am afraid this visit from one, who has not the honour of knowing you——

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Oh make no apology, ma'am.---Mignonet you may withdraw.
(*Exit Mignonet*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

It may appear extraordinary that a stranger thus intrudes upon you;—but a particular circumstance determined me to take this liberty. I hope you will excuse the freedom.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

You do me honour, ma'am; pray no excuses. A particular circumstance, you say?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I shall appear, perhaps, very ridiculous, and indeed I am afraid I have done the most absurd thing! but a lady of your acquaintance—you know my lady Constant, ma'am?

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Extremely well.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

She has given you such an amiable character for bene-

benevolence and a certain elegant way of thinking, entirely your own, that I flatter myself, if it is in your power, you will be generous enough to afford me your assistance.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Lady Constant is very obliging. Make a trial of me, ma'am, and if I can be of any use——

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I fear I shall ask you a strange question :---are you acquainted with a gentleman of the name of Lovemore?

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Lovemore? No such name in my list.---Lovemore? No ;---I recollect no such person. The circle of my acquaintance is small: I am almost a stranger in town.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

That makes an end, Ma'am. I beg your pardon. I have given you an unnecessary trouble. (*going*)

Mrs. BELLMOUR. (*aside*)

Mighty odd this! her manner is interesting.--- You have given me no trouble, but my curiosity is excited. (*takes her by the hand*) I beg you will keep your chair. Pray be seated.---What can this mean? (*aside*) Will you be so good as to inform me, who the gentleman is?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

The story will be uninteresting to you, and to me
it

it is painfull. My grievances——(*puts her handkerchief to her eyes*).

Mrs. BELLMOUR. (*aside*)

Her grief affects me. (*looks at her till she has recovered herself*) I would not importune too much--

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You have such an air of frankness and generosity, that I will open myself without reserve: I have the tenderest regard for Mr. Lovemore: I have been married to him these two years. I admired his understanding, his sensibility, and his spirit. My heart was his; I loved him with unbounded passion. I thought the flame was mutual, and, you may believe I was happy. But of late, there is such a revolution in his temper! I know not what to make of it. I am doomed to be unhappy.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Perhaps not: you may still have much in your power.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

My power is at an end. Instead of the looks of affection, and the expressions of tenderness, with which he used to meet me, it is nothing now but cold, averted, superficial civility; while abroad he runs on in a wild career of pleasure, and to my deep affliction, has attached himself entirely to another object.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

And if I had known Mr. Lovemore, do you imagine that my advice or persuasion would avail you any thing?

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G

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I had such a fancy. (*aside*) What can I think of her?

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

You are much mistaken. In these cases friends may interpose, but what can they do? They recommend a wife to the good will, the honour, and generosity of her husband. But when a woman, who should be esteemed and loved, is recommended as an object of compassion, she is humbled indeed: it is all over with her. A wife should recommend herself by the graces of her person, and the variety of her talents. Men will prove false, and if there is nothing in your complaint but mere gallantry on his side, I protest I do not see that your case is so very bad.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Can it be worse, Ma'am?

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

A great deal.—If his affections, instead of being alienated, had been extinguished, what would be the consequence?—A downright, fullen, habitual insensibility. From that lethargy of affection a man is not easily recalled. In all Love's bill of mortality there is not a more fatal disorder. But this is not the case with Mr. Lovemore: by your account, he still has sentiment; and where there is sentiment, there is room to hope for an alteration.—But where the heart has lost its feeling, you have the pain of finding yourself neglected; and for what? The man is grown stupid, and to the warm beams of wit and beauty, as impenetrable as an ice-house.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

That is not my complaint. I have to do with one, who is too susceptible of impressions from every beautiful object that comes in his way.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Why, so much the better. A new idea strikes his fancy. He is inconstant, but after wavering and fluttering, he may settle at last.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

How light she makes of it! She apologizes for him! (*aside*)

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

And perhaps, the fault is on the woman's side.—

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

The virtue of my conduct, Madam—

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Oh! I would have laid my life you would be at that work. But virtue is not the question at present. I suppose virtue; that is always understood. The fault I mean, is the want of due attention to the art of pleasing. It is there that most women fail. In these times, virtue alone may be its own reward.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

But after being married so long, and behaving all the time with such an equality—

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Ay, that equality is the rock so many split upon. The men will change; they love variety. Excuse my freedom. Do you know your rival?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

There I own I am somewhat puzzled.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Never throw up the cards for all that. Take my advice, Ma'am.—Employ but half the pains you now use perhaps in teasing yourself, to vie with the person who has struck your husband's fancy,—to vie with her, I say, in the arts of pleasing; do this, and victory is your's. If I judge right, you have qualities that may dispute his heart with any body.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You are pleased to compliment,

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Oh! by no means; but you must exert yourself. It is the wife's business to bait the hook for her husband with variety. Virtue alone will not do it. Vice puts on allurements: why should not truth and innocence do the same? That is the whole affair, Ma'am: I would not make myself uneasy.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Not uneasy, when a wild, ungrateful libertine—

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Give me leave, I have been married, and am a
little

little in the secret.—To win a heart is easy; to keep it the difficulty. After the fatal words “for better, for worse,” women in general relax into indolence, and while they are guilty of no infidelity, they think every thing is right. But they are mistaken: a great deal is wanting; an address, vivacity, a desire to please.—A favourite poet,—Prior he expressed it with delicacy:

Above the fix'd and settled rules
Of vice and virtue in the schools,
The better part should set before 'em
A grace, a manner, a decorum.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

But when the natural temper——

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Oh! the natural temper must be forced. Home must be made a place of pleasure to the husband. How is that to be done? Virtue of itself will not please the taste of this age; and that equality, which you talk of, is a sameness that palls and wearies. A wife should throw infinite variety into her manner. She should, as it were, multiply herself, and shew a number of different women collected in her own person. The grave, the gay, the tender, affectionate, witty, silent, and talkative, all in their turns, all shifting the scene, and she succeeding to herself as quick as lightening. And this I take to be the whole mystery; the way to keep a man.—But I beg your pardon. I go on too fast: you will think me the giddiest creature.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Quite the reverse, Ma'am; you are so obliging.—
(*aside*) Sir Brilliant has told me truth, I believe.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

I have tired myself and you too.—But pray, may I now enquire, who was so kind as to intimate that I am acquainted with Mr. Lovemore?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

It was a mere mistake. I have given you a great deal of trouble. You will excuse my frankness; I had heard that his visits were frequent here.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

His visits frequent here! My Lady Constant could not tell you so?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

She told me quite the contrary. She knows your amiable qualities, and does you justice.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

The accident is lucky: it has procured me the honour of your acquaintance. And I suppose you imagined that I had robbed you of Mr. Lovemore's heart?—Scandal will be buzzing about. I can laugh at every thing of that sort. (*a rap at the door*) Oh! Heavens! some troublesome visit.—
(*rings a bell*)

Enter

Enter MIGNIONET.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

I am not at home. Go, and give an answer.

MIGNIONET.

It is Lord Etheridge, Ma'am: he is coming up stairs. The servants did not know you had changed your mind.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Was ever any thing so cross? Tell his Lordship I have company; I am busy; I am not well; any thing, don't let him come in. Make haste, dispatch: I won't see him.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I beg I may not hinder you: I shall take my leave.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

By no means. Our conversation grows interesting. I positively will not see my Lord.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I can't agree to that. You must see his Lordship. I can step into another room.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Will you be so good?—You will find something to amuse you in that cabinet. (*points to a door in the back scene*) We must talk further. My Lord shan't stay long.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Nay, but if you stand upon ceremony——

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Very well: I'll contrive it. This is a lover of mine. A lover and a husband are the same thing. Perhaps it will divert you to hear how I manage him. I hear him on the stairs. Make haste: Mignionet shew the way. (*Mrs. Lovemore and Mignionet go out at the back scene*)

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Let me see how I look to receive him.

(*runs to her glass*)

Enter LOVEMORE, *with a Star and Garter, as*
LORD ETHERIDGE.

LOVEMORE.

*A heav'nly image in the glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears,
Repairs her smiles——*

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Repairs her smiles, my Lord! You are satirical this morning. Pray, my Lord, are my features out of repair, like an old house in the country, that wants a tenant?

LOVEMORE.

Nay, now you wrest the words from their visible intention. You can't suppose that I impute to such perfect beauty the least want of repair, whatever
may

ay be the case, Ma'am, with regard to the want of
r tenant.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Oh! then your opinion is, that I want a tenant. And perhaps you think I am going to put up a bill to signify to all passers-by, that here is a mansion to be let, enquire of the widow Blackacre. I like your notion; I don't think it would be a bad scheme. Shall I try it?

LOVEMORE.

A palace needs no such invitation. It's natural beauty attracts admiring eyes. But who can bid up to the price? The person who is able to do it—

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Will be happy; I know that is what you are going to say. But he must do homage for it; and then I will let it to none but a single gentleman. Do you know any body, whom those conditions will suit?

LOVEMORE.

Those conditions, Ma'am——(*aside*) What the devil does she mean? I am not detected, I hope.——To be sure, Ma'am, those conditions—And—none but single gentlemen will presume to——

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

And then it must be a lease for life. But that will never do. Nobody will be troubled with it. I shall never get it off my hands: do you think I shall, my Lord?

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

There must be very little taste left, if you have not a number of bidders. You know the ambition of my heart ; you know I am devoted to you, upon any terms, even though it were to be bought with life.

MRS. BELLMOUR.

Heavens ! what a dying swain you are ! And does your Lordship mean to be guilty of matrimony ? Lord ! what a question have I asked ? To be sure I am the giddiest creature. My Lord, don't you think me a strange madcap ?

LOVEMORE.

A vein of wit, like your's, that springs at once from vivacity and sentiment, serves to exalt your beauty, and give animation to every charm.

MRS. BELLMOUR.

Upon my word, you have said it finely !—But you are in the right, my Lord. Your pensive, melancholy beauty is the most insipid thing in nature. And yet we often see features without a mind ; and the owner of them sits in the room with you, like a mere vegetable, for an hour together, till at last she is incited to the violent exertion of, “ Yes, Sir”——“ I fancy not, Ma'am,” and then a matter of fact conversation ! “ Miss Beverley is going to be married to Captain Shoulder-Knot—My Lord Mortgage has had another tumble at Hazard—“ Sir Harry Wilding has lost his election—They say “ short-aprons are coming into fashion.”

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Oh! a matter of fact conversation is insupportable.

MRS. BELLMOUR.

But you meet with nothing else. All in great spirits about nothing, and not an idea among them. Go to Ranelagh, or to what public place you will, it is just the same. A lady comes up to you; "How charmingly you look!--But my dear M'em, did you hear what happened to us the other night?--We were going home from the Opera---you know my aunt Roly-Poly; it was her coach. There was she and Lady Betty Fidget---What a sweet blonde! How do you do, my dear? (*curtsying as to another going by*) My Lady Betty is quite recovered; we were all frightened about her; but Doctor Snake-root was called in; no, not Doctor Snake-root, Doctor Bolus; and so he altered the course of the medicines, and so my Lady Betty is purely now.—Well, there was she, and my aunt, and Sir George Bragwell—a pretty man Sir George—finest teeth in the world—Your Ladyship's most obedient—(*curtsying*) We expected you last night, but you did not come.—He! he! he!—And so there was Sir George and the rest of us; and so turning the corner of Bond-street, the brute of a coachman—I humbly thank your Grace (*curtsys*)---the brute of a coachman overturned us, and so my aunt Roly-Poly was frightened out of her wits; and Lady Betty has had her nerves again. Only think! such accidents!--I am glad to see you look so well; a l'honneur; he! he! he!"

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Ho! ho! you paint to the life. I see her moving before me in all her airs.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

With this conversation their whole stock is exhausted, and away they run to cards. Quadrille has murdered wit!

LOVEMORE.

Ay, and beauty too. Cards are the worst enemies to a complexion: the small-pox is not so bad. The passions throw themselves into every feature: I have seen the countenance of an angel changed, in a moment, to absolute deformity: the little loves and graces, that sparkled in the eye, bloomed in the cheek, and smiled about the mouth, all wing their flight, and leave the face, which they before adorned, a prey to grief, to anger, malice, and fury, and the whole train of fretful passions.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

And the language of the passions is sometimes heard upon those occasions.

LOVEMORE.

Very true, Ma'am; and if by chance they do bridle and hold in a little, the struggle they undergo is the most ridiculous sight in nature. I have seen a huge oath quivering on the pale lip of a reigning toast for half an hour together, and an uplifted eye accusing the gods for the loss of an odd trick. And then, at last, the whole room is a babel of sounds. "My Lord, you flung away the game.—Sir George, why

" why did not you rough the spade?---Captain Ha-
 " vird, why did not you lead through the honour?
 " --Ma'am it was not the play---pardon me Sir---
 " but ma'am,---but Sir---I would not play with you
 " for straws; don't you know what Hoyle says?---
 " If A and B are partners against C and D, and
 " the game nine all, A and B have won three tricks,
 " and C and D four tricks; C leads his suit, D
 " puts up the King, then returns the suit; A passes,
 " C puts up the queen, and B trumps it; and so
 " A and B and C and D are bandied about;"
 they attack, they defend, and all is jargon, and con-
 fusion, wrangling, noise, and nonsense; and high
 life, and polite conversation,——Ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Ho! ho! the pencil of Hogarth could not do it
 better. And yet one is dragged to these places. One
 must play sometimes. We must let our friends pick
 our pockets now and then, or they drop our acquain-
 tance. Do you ever play, my Lord?

LOVEMORE.

Play, Ma'am?—(*aside*) What does she mean?
 I must play the hypocrite to the end of the chapter.
 —Play?—Now and then, as you say one must; to
 oblige, and from necessity; but from taste, or in-
 clination, no; I never touch a card.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Oh! very true; I forgot. You dedicate your
 time to the Muses; a downright rhyming Peer. Do
 you know, my Lord, that I am charmed with your
 song?

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Are you?

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Absolutely; and I really think you would make an admirable Vauxhall poet.

LOVEMORE.

Nay, now you flatter me.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

No, as I live; it is very pretty. And do you know that I can sing it already? Come, you shall hear how I murder it. I have no voice to-day, but you shall hear me. (*Sings.*)

I.

*Attend all ye fair, and I'll tell you the art
To bind ev'ry fancy with ease in your chains;
To hold in soft fetters the conjugal heart,
And banish from HYMEN his doubts and his pains.*

II.

*When Juno was deck'd with the Cestus of Love,
At first she was handsome; she charming became:
With skill the soft passions it taught her to move,
To kindle at once, and to keep up the flame.*

III.

*'Tis this gives the eyes all their magic and fire,
The voice melting accents; impassions the kiss;
Confers the sweet smile, that awakens desire,
And plants round the fair each incentive to bliss.*

Thence

IV.

*Thence flows the gay chat, more than reason that charms;
The eloquent blush, that can beauty improve;
The fond sigh, the fond vow; the soft touch that alarms;
The tender disdain, the renewal of love.*

V.

*Ye fair, take the Cestus, and practice it's pow'r:
The mind unaccomplish'd, mere features are vain;
With wit, with good humour enliven each hour,
And the loves, and the graces shall walk in your train.*

LOVEMORE.

My poetry is infinitely obliged to you. It grows into sense, as you sing it. Your voice, like the Cestus of Venus, bestows a grace upon every thing.

MRS. BELLMOUR.

Oh! fulsome! I sing horridly. (*goes to the glass*) How do I look?—Don't tell me, my Lord; you are studying a compliment, but I am resolved to mortify you; I won't hear it.—Well! have you thought of any thing? Let it pass; it's too late now. Pray, my Lord, how came you to choose so grave a subject as connubial happiness?

LOVEMORE.

Close and particular that question! (*aside*)

MRS. BELLMOUR.

Juno! Hymen! doubts and pains! one would almost swear that you have a wife at home, who sat for the picture,

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Ma'am, the—(*embarrassed*) The compliment—you are only laughing at me—the subject, from every day's experience——(*aside*) Does she suspect me?——the subject is common—Batchelors wives, you know——ha! ha!——And when you inspire the thought; when you are the bright original, it is no wonder that the copy——

MRS. BELLMOUR.

Horrid! going to harp on the old string. Odious solicitations! I hate all proposals. I am not in the humour. You must release me now: your visit is rather long. I have indulged you a great while. And besides, were I to listen to your vows, what would become of poor Sir Brilliant Fashion?

LOVEMORE.

Sir Brilliant Fashion?

MRS. BELLMOUR.

Do you know him?

LOVEMORE.

I know whom you mean. I have seen him; but that's all. He lives with a strange set, and does not move in my sphere. If he is a friend of your's, I have no more to say.

MRS. BELLMOUR.

Is there any thing to say against him?

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Nay, I have no knowledge of the gentleman. They who know him best, don't rate him high. A sort of current coin that passes in this town. You will do well to beware of counterfeits.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

But this is very alarming——

Enter MIGNIONET, in a violent hurry.

MIGNIONET.

My dear madam, I am frightened out of my senses. The poor Lady—where are the heartshorn drops?

LOVEMORE.

The lady! what lady?

MIGNIONET.

Never stand asking what lady. She has fainted away all on a sudden: she is now in strong hystericks; give me the drops.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

I must run to her assistance. Adieu, my Lord. I shall be at home in the evening. Mignionet, step this way. Your Lordship will excuse me: I shall expect to see you. Come, Mignionet; make haste; make haste.

[Exit with Mignionet.]

LOVEMORE.

I hope the lady has not overheard me. What a villain am I to carry on this scheme against so much beauty, innocence, and merit? And to wear this

badge of honour for the darkest purposes? And then my friend Sir Brilliant, will it be fair to supplant him?---Prithee, be quiet, my dear conscience! none of your meddling; don't interrupt a gentleman in his pleasures. Don't you know, my good friend, that love has no respect for persons, but soars above all laws of honour and of friendship? No reflection; have her I must, and that quickly too, or she will discover all. Besides, this is my wife's fault: why does not she make home agreeable? I am willing to be happy; I could be constant to her, but she is not formed for happiness. What the devil is madam Fortune about now?—(*Sir Brilliant sings within*) Sir Brilliant, by all that's infamous. Confusion! place to hide me? no escape? The door is locked. Mignionet, Mignionet, open the door.

MIGNIONET. (*within*)

You must not come in here.

LOVEMORE.

What shall I do? This star, and this ribbon will bring me to disgrace. Away with this tell-tale evidence. (*Takes off the ribbon*) Go, thou blushing devil, and hide thyself for ever. (*Puts it in his pocket*)

Enter SIR BRILLIANT, *singing*.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Mrs. Bellmour, I have such a story for you.---How!---Lovemore?

LOVEMORE.

Your slave, Sir Brilliant, your slave. (*hiding the star with his hat*)

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

I did not think you had been acquainted here.

LOVEMORE.

You are right. I came in quest of you. I saw the lady. I was drawn hither by mere curiosity. We have had some conversation; and I made it subservient to your purposes. I have been giving a great character of you.

SIR BRILLIANT.

You are allways at the service of your friends. But what's the matter? what are you fumbling about? (*pulls the hat*)

LOVEMORE.

'Sdeath! have care: don't touch me. (*puts his handkerchief to his breast*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

What the devil ails you?

LOVEMORE.

Oh! keep off—(*aside*) Here's a business.—Taken in the old way: let me pass.—I have had a fling at Lord Etheridge: he will be out of favour with the widow: I have done you that good.—Racks and torments, my old complaint! (*wanting to pass him*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

What complaint? You had better sit down.

LOVEMORE.

No, no ; air, the air. I must have a surgeon. A stroke of a tennis ball ! My Lord Rackett's unlucky left hand. Let me pass. There is something forming here. (*passes him*) To be caught is the devil. (*aside*)—Don't mention my name. You will counteract all I have said.—Oh ! torture, torture !—I will explain to you another time. Sir Brilliant, your's. I have served your interest.—Oh ! there is certainly something forming. [*Exit.*]

SIR BRILLIANT.

What does all this mean?—So, so, Mrs. Lovemore's suspicions are well founded.—The widow has her private visits, I see. Yes, yes, there is something forming here.

Enter Mrs. BELLMOUR.

SIR BRILLIANT.

So ; here she comes. The whole shall be explained. I hope, ma'am, that I don't interrupt you with any piquet-friend.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

You are allways a torment : what brings, you hither ?

SIR BRILLIANT.

There are times, ma'am, when a visit—

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Is unseasonable, and your's is so now. How can you tease me ?

SIR

SIR BRILLIANT.

I thought as much.—There are some things that may require to be discussed between us.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Reserve them all for another time. I can't hear you now. You must leave me. There is a lady taken ill in the next room.

SIR BRILLIANT.

And here has been a gentleman taken ill in this room.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

How troublesome! you must begone. Do you dispute my will and pleasure?—Fly this moment.

SIR BRILLIANT.

But ma'am—Nay, if you insist upon it——(*goes*)

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

But, Sir!—I will be absolute: you must leave me.
(*puts him out*) There, and now I'll make sure of the door.

Enter Mrs. LOVEMORE, leaning on MIGNIONET.

MIGNIONET.

This way, madam: here is more air in this room.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

How do you find yourself? Pray sit down.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

My spirits were too weak. I could not support it any longer. Such a scene of perfidy!

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

You astonish me: what perfidy?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Perfidy of the blackest dye! I told you that you were acquainted with my husband?

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Acquainted with your husband! (*angrily*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

A moment's patience.—Yes, madam, you are acquainted with him.—The base man, who went hence but now——

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Sir Brilliant Fashion?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

No; your Lord Etheridge, as he calls himself——

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Lord Etheridge? What of him pray?

LOVEMORE.

False, dissembling man! he is my husband, ma'am: not Lord Etheridge, but plain Mr. Lovemore; my Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

And has he been base enough to assume a title to ensnare me to my undoing?

MIGNIONET. (*going*)

Well, for certain I believe the devil's in me: I always thought him a fly one. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

To see him carrying on this dark design,—to see the man, whom I have ever esteemed and loved,—the man whom I must still love,—esteem him, I fear, I never can,—to see him before my face, with that artful treachery! it was too much for sensibility like mine; I felt the shock too severely, and I sunk under it.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

I am ready to sink this moment with amazement. I saw him, for the first time, at old Mrs. Loveit's. She introduced him to me. The appointment was of her own making.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You know Mrs. Loveit's character, I suppose.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

The practised veteran!—Could I suspect that a woman, in her stile of life, would lend herself to a vile stratagem against my honour? That she would join in a conspiracy against her own sex?—Mr. Lovemore, shall never enter these doors again.—I am obliged to you, ma'am, for this visit; to me a providential incident. I am sorry for your share in it. The discovery secures my peace and happiness;

to you, it is a fatal conviction, a proof unanswerable against the person to whom you are joined for life.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

After this discovery, it cannot be for life. I am resolved not to pass another day under his roof.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Hold, hold; no sudden resolutions. Consider a little: passion is a bad adviser. This may take a turn to your advantage.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

That can never be: I am lost beyond redemption.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Don't decide too rashly. Come, come, the man, who has certain qualities, is worth thinking about, before one throws the hideous thing away for ever. Mr. Lovemore is a traitor; but is not he still amiable? And besides, you have heard his sentiments. That song points at something. Perhaps you are a little to blame. He did not write upon such a subject, without a cause to suggest it. We will talk over this matter coolly. You have saved me, and I must return the obligation. You shall stay dinner with me.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Excuse me. Mr. Lovemore may possibly go home. He shall hear of his guilt, while the sense of it pierces here, and wounds me to the quick.

Mrs.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Now there you are wrong: take my advice first. I will lay such a plan, as may ensure him your's for ever. Come, come, you must not leave me yet. (*takes her hand*) Answer me one question: don't you still think he has qualities, that do in some sort apologize for his vices?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I don't know what to think of it: I hope he has.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Very well then. I have lost a lover; you may gain one. Your conduct upon this occasion may reform him; and let me tell you that the man, who has it in his power to atone for his faults, should not be entirely despised.—Let the wife exert herself; let her try her powers of pleasing, and take my word for it,

The wild gallant no more abroad will roam,
But find his lov'd variety at home.

End of the THIRD ACT.

A C T

A C T the F O U R T H.

Scene, an Apartment in LOVEMORE'S House.

Mr. and Mrs. LOVEMORE, at table, after dinner;
Servants taking things out of the room.

LOVEMORE. (*filling a glass*)

I Wonder you are not tired of the same eternal
 topick. (*sipping his wine*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

If I make it an eternal topick, it is for your own
 good, Mr. Lovemore.

LOVEMORE.

I know I have your good wishes, and you have
 mine. All our absent friends, Mrs. Lovemore.

(*drinks*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

If you would but wish well to yourself, Sir, I
 should be happy.—But in the way you go on, your
 health must be ruined; day is night, and night day;
 your substance squandered; your constitution de-
 stroyed; and your family quite neglected.

LOVEMORE.

Family neglected! you see I dined at home, and
 this is my reward for it.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You dined at home, Sir, because something abroad has disconcerted you. You went, I suppose, after I saw you at Lady Constant's, to your old haunt, your friend Mrs. Loveit——

LOVEMORE.

Mrs. Loveit! ha! ha! I dropt her acquaintance long ago. No, my love, I drove into the city, and spent the rest of the morning upon business. I had long accounts to settle with old Discount the banker.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

And that to be sure engrossed all your time. Business must be minded. Did you find him at home?

LOVEMORE.

It was by his own appointment. I went to his house directly after I parted from you. I have been no where else. Matters of account always fatigue me.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I would not be too inquisitive, Sir.

LOVEMORE.

Oh! no; you never are. I staid at the banker's the rest of the time; and I came straight from his house to have the pleasure of dining with you.

(fills a glass of wine)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Were there any sincerity in that declaration, I should

should be happy. A tavern life has hitherto been your delight. I wonder what delight you can find in such an eternal round of gaming, riot and dissipation. Will you answer me one question?

LOVEMORE.

With great pleasure,—(*aside*) if it is not inconvenient.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Lay your hand on your heart, and tell me,—
Have I deserved this usage?

LOVEMORE.

My humble service to you, my love. (*drinks*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I am sure I have never been deficient in any one point of the duty I owe you. You won my heart, and I gave it freely.

LOVEMORE. (*going to sleep*)

It is very true.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Your interest has been mine. I have known no pleasure unconnected with your happiness. Diversions, shew, and pomp, have had no allurements for me.

LOVEMORE. (*dropping asleep*)

Yes,—you are right—just as you please—

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Had I been inclined to follow the example of other women, your fortune would have felt it before now. You might have been thousands out of pocket; but your interest has been the object of my attention; and your convenience——

LOVEMORE. (*turns his chair from her*)

You reason very——you reason admir——ably——
admi——rably——allways——all——allways——gay
——and——enter——entertaining——(*going to sleep*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Marriage is generally considered as an introduction to the great scene of the world. I thought it a retreat to less noisy and serener pleasures. What is called polite company (*he falls fast asleep*) was not my taste. You was lavish in expence; I was therefore an œconomist. From the moment marriage made me your's, the pleasure arising from your company——There! fast asleep! Agreeable company indeed!——This is ever his way. (*she rises*) Unfeeling man!——It is too plain that I am grown his aversion. Mr. Lovemore! (*looking at him*) you little think what a scene this day has brought to light. And yet he hopes with falsehood to varnish and disguise his treachery. How mean the subterfuge! Shall I rouse him now, and tax him with his guilt? My heart is too full, and reproach will only tend to exasperate, and perhaps make him irreconcilable. The pride, that can stoop to low and wretched artifice, but ill can brook detection. Let him rest for the present. The widow Bellmour's experiment

periment may answer better.---I will try it at least.
-- Oh! Mr. Lovemore, you will break my heart.

[*Looks at him, and Exit.*]

LOVEMORE. (*talking in his sleep*)

I do listen---I am not asleep. (*sleeps and nods*)
You are very right;---always right---I am only
thinking a little. No---no---no---(*mutters indistinctly*) It was not two o'clock---in bed---in bed by
twelve---Sir Bashfull is an oaf---The widow Bell-
mour---(*sleeps, and his head rolls about*) What's
the matter? (*waking*) I beg your pardon; I was
beginning to nod. What did you say, my dear?
(*leans on the table, without looking about*) One can-
not always you know---(*turns about*) 'Sdeath! she
is gone! Oh! fast asleep. This is ever the way,
when one dines at home. Let me shake it off. (*rises*)
What's o'clock?---No amusement in this house;
what shall I do? The Widow?---I must not venture
in that quarter. My evil genius Sir Brilliant will be
busy there. Is any body in the way? I must fally
out. My dear Venus, favour your votary this after-
noon:

———— Your best arms employ,
All wing'd with pleasure, and all tipt with joy.

[*Exit.*]

Scene changes to SIR BASHFULL'S.

Enter LADY CONSTANT and FURNISH.

LADY CONSTANT.

Who brought this letter?

FUR-

FURNISH.

A fervant of Mrs. Lovemore's: he waits an answer.

LADY CONSTANT.

My compliments to Mrs. Lovemore, and I shall wait upon her.

FURNISH.

Yes, Ma'am. (*going*)

LADY CONSTANT.

And hark ye, Furnish;---have the things been carried to Sir Brilliant, as I ordered?

FURNISH.

I have obeyed your Ladyship's commands. The steward went himself. Mr. Pounce, your Ladyship knows, is a trusty body. You may depend upon his care.

LADY CONSTANT.

Go and send Mrs. Lovemore her answer. She may depend upon my being with her in time.

[*Exit* Furnish.]

LADY CONSTANT, *alone*.

What can Mrs. Lovemore want? (*reads*) "*Ladyship's company to a card-party: but cards are the least part of my object. I have something of higher moment in view, and the presence of my friends is absolutely necessary.*" There is some mystery in all this. What does she mean? I shall go, and then the scene will clear up: Those diamond buckles em-

embarrass me more than Mrs. Lovemore's unintelligible letter. Diamond buckles to me! From what quarter? Who could send them? Nobody but Sir Brilliant. I am right in my conclusion: they came from him. Who could take the liberty but a person of his cast? A presuming man! But I have mortified his vanity. Before this time, he has found his diamonds thrown back upon his hands, with the disdain which such confidence deserves.---But if I have made a mistake!---Oh! no; no danger. Has not Sir Brilliant made overtures to me? Has not he declared himself? He sees Sir Bashfull's behaviour, and his vanity plumes itself upon that circumstance. To give me my revenge against a crazy and insufferable husband, he would fain induce me to ruin myself with a coxcomb. Besides; he heard the whole of Sir Bashfull's dispute about diamonds and trinkets: the thing is clear; it was Sir Brilliant sent them; and by that stratagem he hopes to bribe me into compliance.---That bait will never take; though here comes one, who, I am sure, deserves to be treated without a grain of ceremony.

Enter SIR BASHFULL.

SIR BASHFULL.

Here she is. Now let me see whether she will take any notice of the present I sent her. She has reason to be in good humour, I think.---Your servant, Madam.

LADY CONSTANT.

Your address is polite, Sir.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

Still proud and obstinate!--Has any thing happened to disturb the harmony of your temper?

LADY CONSTANT.

Considering what little discord you make, it is a wonder that my temper is not always in tune.

SIR BASHFULL.

If you never gave me cause, Madam——

LADY CONSTANT.

Oh! for mercy sake, truce with altercation. I am tired out with the eternal violence of your temper. Those frequent starts of passion hurry me out of my senses: and those unaccountable whims, that hold such constant possession of you——

SIR BASHFULL.

Whims, Madam? --- Not to comply with you in every thing is a whim, truly. Must I yield to the exorbitant demands of your extravagance? When you laid close siege to me for diamond bawbles, and I know not what, was that a whim of mine? Did I take that fancy into my head, without cause, and without sufficient foundation?

LADY CONSTANT.

Well, we have exhausted the subject. Have not you told me a thousand times that there is no living with me? I agree to it. And have not I returned the compliment? We have nothing new to say; and now, all that remains, is to let the lawyer reduce to writing our mutual opinions, and so we may

part with the pleasure of giving each other a most woeful character.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

The buckles have had no effect. Stubborn! she has received them, and won't own it.

LADY CONSTANT.

A dash of your pen, Sir, at the foot of certain articles now preparing, will make us both easy. (*going*)

SIR BASHFULL.

If we don't live happily, it is your own fault.

LADY CONSTANT.

That is very old.

SIR BASHFULL.

If you would controul your passion for play —

LADY CONSTANT.

Quite threadbare!

SIR BASHFULL.

I have still a regard for you.

LADY CONSTANT.

Worn-out to frippery!--I can't hear any more. The law will dress it up in new language for us, and that will end our differences.

[*Exit.*

SIR BASHFULL. (*alone*)

I must unburthen my heart: there is no time to
be

be lost. I love her; I admire her; she inflames my tenderest passions, and raises such a conflict here in my very heart, I cannot any longer conceal the secret from her. I'll go and tell her all this moment. ---But then that meddling fiend, her maid, will be there: Po! I can turn her out of the room: but then the jade will suspect something.---Her Ladyship may be alone: I'll send to know where she is. Who is there? Sideboard——

Enter SIDEBOARD.

SIR BASHFULL:

Go and tell your lady that——(*pauses*)

SIDEBOARD.

Did your Honour want me?

SIR BASHFULL.

No matter; it does not signify.—(*aside*) I shall never be able to tell her my mind: a glance of her eye, and my own confusion will undo all.

SIDEBOARD.

I thought your Honour called.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

A thought comes across me: I'll write her a letter. Yes, yes, a letter will do the business. Sideboard, draw that table this way—Reach me a chair.

SIDEBOARD.

There your Honour.

SIR BASHFULL.

Do you stay while I write a letter. You shall carry it for me. (*sits down to write.*)

SIDEBBOARD.

Yes, Sir. I hope he has an intrigue upon his hands. A servant thrives under a master that has his private amusements. Love on, say I, if you are so given : it will bring grist to my mill.

SIR BASHFULL. (*writing*)

This will surprise her. Warm, passionate, and tender ! and yet it does not come up to what I feel.

SIDEBBOARD:

What is he at ? ---I may as well read the newspaper. (*takes it out of his pocket*) What in the name of wonder is all this ?---Ha ! ha ! (*bursts into a loud laugh*) I never heard the like of this before. Oh ! ho ! ho ! ho !

SIR BASHFULL.

What does the scoundrel mean ? (*stares at him*)

SIDEBBOARD.

Ha ! ha ! ha ! I can't help laughing.

SIR BASHFULL.

Does the villain suspect me ? (*rises*) Hark ye, firrah, if ever I find that you dare listen at any door in my house——

SIDEBBOARD.

Sir !

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Confess the truth: have not you been listening to my conversation with Mr. Lovemore this morning?

SIDEBOARD.

Who I, Sir? I would not be guilty of such a thing: I never did the like in all my days.

SIR BASHFULL.

What was you laughing at?

SIDEBOARD.

A foolish thing in the newspaper, Sir, that's all. I'll read it to your Honour. (*reads*) We hear that a new comedy is now in rehearsal, and will speedily be performed, intitled, *The Amorous Husband, or the Man in Love with his own Wife.*

SIR BASHFULL.

And what do you see to laugh at?

SIDEBOARD.

See, Sir? I have lived in a great many families, and never heard of the like before.

SIR BASHFULL. (*aside*)

There, there, there!—I shall be the butt of my own servants.—Sirrah, leave the room. And let me never hear that you have the trick of listening in my house.

SIDEBOARD.

No, Sir.—The Man in Love with his own Wife!

[*Exit laughing.*]

SIR BASHFULL.

What does the varlet mean?—No matter—I have finished my letter, and it shall be sent this moment. —But then, if I should get into a comedy? Po! no more scruples. I'll seal it directly—Sideboard—

Enter SIDEBOARD.

SIR BASHFULL. (*sealing the letter*)

I have opened my heart to her. What do you bring your hat and stick for?

SIDEBOARD.

To go out with your Honour's letter.

SIR BASHFULL.

You have not far to go. Take this, and let nobody see you,

SIDEBOARD.

I warrant me, your Honour,

[*Exit.*

SIR BASHFULL.

I feel much lighter now. A load is taken off my heart.

Enter SIDEBOARD.

SIR BASHFULL.

What do you come back for?

SIDEBOARD.

A word or two by way of direction, if you please.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Blockhead ! give it to me—(*aside*) If I direct it, he finds me out.—Go about your business : I have no occasion for you ; leave the room.

SIDEBOARD.

Very well, Sir.—Does he think to manage his own intrigues ? If he takes my commission out of my hands, I shall give him warning. The vices of our masters are all the vails a poor servant has left.

[*Exit.*

SIR BASHFULL.

What must be done ?—Mr. Lovemore could conduct this business for me. He is a man of address, and knows all the approaches to a woman's heart. That fellow, Sideboard, coming again ?—No, no ; this is lucky. Mr. Lovemore, I am glad to see you.

Enter LOVEMORE.

LOVEMORE.

A second visit you see, in one day ; entirely on the score of friendship.

SIR BASHFULL.

And I thank you for it ; heartily thank you.

LOVEMORE.

I broke away from company at the St. Alban's on purpose to attend you. Well, I have made your Lady easier in her mind, have not I ?

SIR BASHFULL.

We don't hit it at all, Mr. Lovemore.

LOVEMORE.

No?

SIR BASHFULL.

I think she has been rather worse, since you spoke to her.

LOVEMORE.

A good symptom that. (*aside*)

SIR BASHFULL.

She has received the diamond buckles. They were delivered to her maid sealed up, and the man never staid to be asked a question. I saw them in her own hand: but not a syllable escaped her. She was not in the least softened, obstinate as a mule!

LOVEMORE.

The manner of conveying your present was not well judged. Why did not you make me the bearer?

SIR BASHFULL.

I wish I had. She talks of parting; and so to avoid coming to extremities, I have even thought of telling her the whole truth at once.

LOVEMORE.

How! acquaint her with your passion?

SIR

SIR BASHFUL.

Ay, and trust to her honour. I could not venture to speak ; I should blush, and falter, and look filly ; and so I have writ a letter to her. Here it is signed and sealed, but not directed. I got into a puzzle about that. Servants, you know, are always putting their own construction upon things.

LOVEMORE.

No doubt : and then your secret flies all over the town.

SIR BASHFULL.

That's what alarmed me. You shall write the superscription, and send it to her.

LOVEMORE.

No, that won't do. Give her a letter under your hand ? I'll speak to her for you : let me try how her pulse beats,

SIR BASHFULL.

But a letter may draw an answer from her, and then, you know, (*smiling at him*) I shall have it under her hand.

LOVEMORE.

I don't like this hurry : we had better take time to consider of it.

SIR BASHFULL.

No, I can't defer the business of my heart a single moment. It burns like a fever here. Sit down, and write the direction ; I'll step and send the servant.

vant. He shall carry it, as if it were a letter from yourself.

Enter SIDEBOARD.

SIDEBOARD.

Sir Brilliant Fashion is below, Sir.

LOVEMORE.

What brings him? He will only interrupt us. Go and talk to him, Sir Bashfull; hear what he has to say; amuse him; any thing rather than let him come up.

SIR BASHFULL.

I am gone: he shan't molest you.

[Exit with Sideboard.]

LOVEMORE.

Fly, make haste; and don't let him know that I am here.—A lucky accident this; I have gained time by it. All matters were in a right train, and he himself levelling the road for me, and now this letter blows me up into the air at once. Some unlucky planet rules to-day. First the widow Bellmour; a hair-breadth scrape I had of it, and now almost ruined here! What in the name of wonder has he writ to her?—Friendship and wafer, by your leave.—But will that be delicate?—Po! honour has always a great deal to preach upon these occasions; but then the business of my love!—Very true; the passions need but say a word, and their business is done. *(opens the letter, and reads)* This must never reach her. I'll write a letter from myself. *(sits down, writes, and starts up)* I hear him coming: no; all

all safe. (*writes*) This will do :—vastly well. Her husband's inhumanity ! Ay, mention that.—The diamonds may be a present from me : yes, I'll venture it—There, there ; that will do—Long adored—Ay—sweetest revenge.—Ay—Eternal admirer—Lovemore.—Now, now, let me see it.—Admirable ! this will do the business. (*seals the letter*)

Enter SIR BASHFULL.

SIR BASHFULL.

Well, have you sent it ?

LOVEMORE.

Not yet : I am writing the direction.

SIR BASHFULL.

And where is that blockhead?—Sideboard !

Enter SIDEBOARD.

SIR BASHFULL.

Numskull, why don't you wait ?—Mr. Lovemore wants you.

LOVEMORE.

Step and deliver this to your Lady, and if she pleases I will wait upon her.

SIR BASHFULL.

Charming !—Take it up stairs directly.

SIDEBOARD.

Up stairs, Sir ? My Lady is in the next room.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Take it to her; make haste; begone. (*Exit Sideboard*) I hope this will succeed: I shall be for ever obliged to you, and so will her Ladyship.

LOVEMORE.

I hope she will, and I shall be proud to serve her.

SIR BASHFULL.

You are very good. She won't prove ungrateful, I dare answer for her.—I should like to see how she receives the letter.---The door is conveniently open.---I will have a peep. Ay, there; there she sits.

LOVEMORE.

Where, Sir Bashfull?

SIR BASHFULL.

Hush, no noise.—There, do you see her? She has the letter in her hand—This is a critical moment: I am all over in a tremble,

LOVEMORE.

Silence; not a word. She opens it.---(*aside*) Now, my dear Cupid, befriend me now, and your altar shall smoke with incense.

SIR BASHFULL.

She colours!

LOVEMORE.

I like that rising blush: a soft and tender token.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

She turns pale.

LOVEMORE.

The natural working of the passions.

SIR BASHFULL.

And now she reddens again!---What is she at now?---There, she has tore the letter in two:---I am a lost, an undone man. (*walks away*)

LOVEMORE.

She has flung it away with indignation: I am undone too. (*aside, and walks away from the door*)

SIR BASHFULL.

Mr. Lovemore, you see what it is all come to.

LOVEMORE.

I am sorry to see so haughty a spirit.

SIR BASHFULL.

An arrogant, ungrateful woman! to make such a return to so kind a letter!

LOVEMORE.

Ay, so kind a letter!

SIR BASHFULL.

Did you ever see such an insolent scorn?

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

I never was so disappointed in all my life.

SIR BASHFULL.

A letter full of the tenderest protestations!

LOVEMORE.

Yes; an unreserved declaration of love!

SIR BASHFULL.

Made with the greatest frankness; throwing myself at her very feet!

LOVEMORE.

Did she once smile? Was there the faintest gleam of approbation in her countenance?

SIR BASHFULL.

She repaid it all with scorn, with pride, contempt, and insolence. I cannot bear this; despised, spurned, and treated like a puppy.

LOVEMORE.

There it stings——like a puppy indeed!

SIR BASHFULL.

Is there a thing in nature so mortifying to the pride of man, as to find oneself rejected and despised by a fine woman, who is conscious of her power, and triumphs in her cruelty?

LOVEMORE.

It is the most damnable circumstance!——

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

My dear Mr. Lovemore, I am obliged to you for taking this matter so much to heart.

LOVEMORE.

I take it more to heart than you aware of.

SIR BASHFULL.

This is mortifying; enough to make one ashamed all the rest of one's life.

LOVEMORE.

I did not expect this fullen ill-humour.

SIR BASHFULL.

Did you ever know so obstinate, so uncomplying a temper?

Enter SIR BRILLIANT.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Sir Bashfull, I forgot to tell you——

LOVEMORE.

He again! he hunts me up and down, as the vice did the devil, with a dagger of lath, in the old comedy. (*aside*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

Hey!---what's the matter?---You seem both out of humour; what does this mean? Have you quarrelled?

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

No, Sir, no quarrell:---why would my booby servants let him in again? (*aside*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

Strike me stupid, but you look very queer upon it.---Lovemore is borrowing money, I suppose: Sir Bashfull is driving a hard bargain, and you can't agree about the premium. Sir Bashfull, let my friend Lovemore have the money?

SIR BASHFULL.

Money!---what does he mean?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Both out of humour, I see: well, as you will. You have no reason to be in harmony with yourselves; my stars shine with a kinder aspect. Here, here, behold a treasury of love. I came back on purpose to shew it to you. (*takes a shagreen case out of his pocket*) See what a present I have received; a magnificent pair of diamond buckles, by all that's amiable.

LOVEMORE.

How?

SIR BASHFULL. (*walking up to him*)

A pair of diamond buckles!

SIR BRILLIANT.

How such a present should be sent to me is more than I can explain at present. Perhaps my friend
Love-

Lovemore gained some intelligence in the quarter where I surprized him to-day, on a visit which I little suspected.

LOVEMORE.

That was to serve you: I know nothing of this business.

SIR BRILLIANT.

The pain in your side, I hope, is better.

LOVEMORE.

Po! this is only to distract your attention, Sir Bashfull.

SIR BASHFULL.

So I suppose. And was this a present to you?

SIR BRILLIANT.

A present, Sir. The consequence of having some tolerable phrase, a person, and a due degree of attention to the service of the ladies.—Do you envy me, Sir Bashfull?

SIR BASHFULL.

I can't but say I do.—(*turns to Lovemore*) My buckles, by all that's false in woman!

LOVEMORE.

Take no notice.—(*walks aside*) Has he sup-
planted me here too, as well as with the widow?

SIR BRILLIANT.

What's the matter with you both?—Burning with envy!

SIR BASHFULL.

And I suppose an elegant epistle, or a well-penned billet-doux, accompanied this token of the lady's affection.

SIR BRILLIANT.

That would have been an agreeable addition, but it is still to come. Too many favours at once might overwhelm a body. A country-looking fellow, as my people tell me, left this, curiously sealed up, at my house: he would not say from whence he came: I should know that in time, was all they could get from him, and I am now panting to learn where this mighty success has attended me. Sir Bashfull, I came, saw, and conquered; ha! ha! ha!

SIR BASHFULL.

But may not this be from some lady, who imagines that you sent it, and therefore chuses to reject your present?

SIR BRILLIANT.

Oh! no; that cannot be the case. A little knowledge of the world would soon convince you that ladies do not usually reject presents from the man, who has the good fortune to please by his manner, a taste for dress, and a certain *je ne sçai quoi* in his person and conversation.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

So I believe.—(*walks aside*) What say you to this, Mr. Lovemore?

LOVEMORE.

She would not have torn a letter from him.

SIR BRILLIANT.

No, Sir Bashfull; a present from me would not have been returned back upon my hands.

SIR BASHFULL.

I dare say not.—(*to Lovemore*) I suppose she will give him my three hundred pounds into the bargain.

LOVEMORE.

After this, I shall wonder at nothing.

SIR BRILLIANT.

What mortified countenances they both put on!
(*looks at them, and laughs*)

SIR BASHFULL. (*walking up to Sir Brilliant*)
And I suppose you expect to have this lady?

SIR BRILLIANT.

No doubt of it. This is the forerunner, I think. Hey, Lovemore!—Sir Bashfull, this it is to be in luck. Ha! ha! (*laughs at them both*)

LOVEMORE *and* SIR BASHFULL.

(both forcing a laugh)

Ha ! ha !

SIR BRILLIANT.

You both seem strangely picqued.—Lovemore, what makes you so uneasy ?

LOVEMORE.

You flatter yourself, and you wrong me—I—I—
(walks away)

SIR BASHFULL.

He is a true friend : he is uneasy on my account.
(aside, and looking at Lovemore)

SIR BRILLIANT.

And Sir Bashfull, something has dashed your spirits. Do you repine at my success ?

SIR BASHFULL.

I can't but say I do, Sir.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Oh ! very well ; you are not disposed to be good company. *A l'honneur*, gentlemen : finish your money matters. Lovemore, where do you spend the evening ?

LOVEMORE.

A good evening to you, Sir Brilliant : I am engaged. Business with Sir Bashfull, you see——

SIR

SIR BRILLIANT.

Well, don't let me be of inconvenience to you. Fare ye well, gentlemen. Thou dear pledge of love (*looking at the buckles*) thus let me clasp thee to my heart.—Sir Bashfull, your fervant.

[*Exit.*

SIR BASHFULL.

What think you now, Mr. Lovemore?

LOVEMORE.

All unaccountable, Sir.

SIR BASHFULL.

By all that's false, I am gulled, cheated, and imposed upon. I am deceived, and dubbed a rank cuckold. It is too clear; she has given him the buckles, and I suppose my bank-notes have taken the same course.—Diamond buckles, and three hundred pounds for Sir Brilliant! A reward for his merit!

LOVEMORE.

He is the favourite, and I have been working for him all this time.

SIR BASHFULL.

I now see through all her artifices. My resolution is fixed. If I can but get ocular demonstration of her guilt; If I can but get the means of proving to the whole world that she is vile enough to cuckold me, I shall then be happy.

LOVEMORE.

Why that will be some consolation!

SIR BASHFULL.

So it will: kind Heaven, grant me that at least; make it plain that she dishonours me, and I am amply revenged.—Hark! I hear her coming. She shall know all I think, and all I feel. I have done with her for ever.

LOVEMORE. (*aside*)

Let me fly the impending storm. If I stay, detection and disgrace pursue me.—Sir Bashfull, I am sorry to see matters take this turn. I have done all in my power, and since there is no room to hope for success, I take my leave, and wish you a good night.

SIR BASHFULL.

No, no; you shall not leave me in this distress. You shall hear me tell her her own, and be a witness of our separation. (*holding him*)

LOVEMORE.

Excuse me: after what has passed, I shall never be able to endure the sight of her. Fare you well; I must be gone; good night, Sir Bashfull.

(*struggling to go*)

SIR BASHFULL.

You are my best friend: I cannot part with you. (*Stands between him and the door*) Stay and hear what she

she has to say for herself; you will see what a turn she will give to the business.

LOVEMORE. (*aside*)

What turn shall I give it?—Confusion! here she comes: I must weather the storm.

Enter LADY CONSTANT.

LADY CONSTANT.

After this behaviour, Mr. Lovemore, I am surprized, Sir, that you can think of staying a moment longer in this house,

LOVEMORE.

Madam, I——'fdeath! I have no invention to assist me at a pinch. (*aside*)

SIR BASHFULL.

Mr. Lovemore is my friend, Madam, and I desire he will stay in my house as long as he pleases.—Hey, Lovemore! (*looks at him and smiles*)

LOVEMORE. (*aside*)

All must out, I fear.

LADY CONSTANT.

Your friend, Sir Bashfull!—And do you authorize him to take this unbecoming liberty? Have you given him permission to send me a letter, so extravagant in the very terms of it?

LOVEMORE. (*aside*)

Ay, now it's coming, and impudence itself has not a word to say.

SIR BASHFULL.

I desired him to send that letter, Madam.

LOVEMORE.

Sir Bashfull desired me, Ma'am.

(bowing respectfully)

SIR BASHFULL.

I desired him.

LOVEMORE.

All at his request, Ma'am.

LADY CONSTANT.

And am I to be made your sport?—I wonder, Mr. Lovemore, that you would condescend to make yourself a party in so poor a plot. Do you presume upon a trifling mark of civility, which you persuaded me to accept of this morning? Do you come disguised under a mask of friendship, to help this gentleman in his design against my honour, and my happiness?

LOVEMORE. *(aside)*

Fairly caught, and nothing can bring me off—

SIR BASHFULL.

A mask of friendship!—He is a true friend, Madam; he sees how ill I am treated, and let me tell you, there is not a word of truth in that letter.

LOVEMORE.

Not a syllable of truth, Ma'am—*(aside)* This will do: his own nonsense will save me.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

It was all done to try you, Madam.

LOVEMORE.

Nothing more, Ma'am: merely to try you.

SIR BASHFULL.

By way of experiment only; just to see how you would behave upon it.

LOVEMORE.

Nothing else was intended; pure innocent mirth.

LADY CONSTANT.

You have been both notably employed. The exploit is worthy of you. Your snare is spread for a woman, and if you had succeeded, the fame of so bright an action would add mightily to two such illustrious characters.

SIR BASHFULL.

A snare spread for her! mark that Mr. Lovemore: she calls it ensnaring.

LOVEMORE.

Ensnared to her own good. (*To Sir Bashfull*)—
He has pleaded admirably for me. (*aside*)

LADY CONSTANT.

As to you, Sir Bashfull, I have long ago ceased to wonder at your conduct: you have lost the power of surprizing me; but when Mr. Lovemore becomes an accomplice in so mean a plot—

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

I am in no plot, madam, and no body wants to ensnare you: do we, Lovemore?

LOVEMORE.

Sir Bashfull knows that no harm was intended.

SIR BASHFULL.

Yes, I am in the secret, and my friend Lovemore meant no harm.

LOVEMORE.

If the letter had succeeded, Sir Bashfull knows there would have been no harm in it.

SIR BASHFULL.

No harm in nature; but I now see how things are; and since your ladyship will listen to nothing for your own good, it is too plain from all that has passed between us, that our tempers are by no means fitted for each other, and I am ready to part whenever you please: nay, I will part.

LADY CONSTANT.

And that is the only point, in which we can agree, Sir.

SIR BASHFULL.

Had the letter been sent from another quarter, it would have met with a better reception: we know where your smiles are bestowed.

LADY

LADY CONSTANT.

Deal in calumny, Sir; give free scope to malice;
I disdain your insinuations.

SIR BASHFULL.

The fact is too clear, and reproaches are now too late. This is the last of our conversing together; and you may take this by the way, you are not to believe one syllable of that letter.

LOVEMORE.

There is not a syllable of it deserves the least credit, Ma'am.

SIR BASHFULL.

It was all a mere joke, Madam: was not it, Lovemore?—And as to your being a fine woman, and as to any passion that any body has conceived for you, there was no such thing; you can witness for me, Lovemore: can't you?

LADY CONSTANT.

Oh! you are witnesses for one another.

LOVEMORE.

Sir Bashfull knows the fairness of my intentions, and I know his.—(*aside*) He has acquitted me better than I expected, thanks to his absurdity.

LADY CONSTANT.

Go on, and aggravate your ill usage, gentlemen.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

It was all a bam, madam, a scene we thought proper to act. Let us laugh at her. (*goes up to Lovemore*)

LOVEMORE.

With all my heart—(*aside*) A silly blockhead! I can't help laughing at him. (*laughing heartily*)

SIR BASHFULL. (*laughing with him*)

Ha! ha!—ha!—all a bam; nothing else; a contrivance to make sport for ourselves.—Hey, Lovemore?

LADY CONSTANT.

This usage is insupportable. I shall not stay for an explanation. Two such worthy confederates!—is my chair ready there? You may depend, Sir, that this is the last time you will see me in this house.

[*Exit.*]

SIR BASHFULL.

Agreed; a bargain; with all my heart, Lovemore I have managed this well.

LOVEMORE.

Charmingly managed! I did not think you had so much spirit.

SIR BASHFULL.

I have found her out. The intrigue is too plain. She and Sir Brilliant are both detected.

LOVE

LOVEMORE.

I never suspected that Sir Brilliant was the happy man. I wish I had succeeded, had it been only to mortify his vanity.

SIR BASHFULL.

And so do I: I wish it too: but never own the letter: deny it to the last.

LOVEMORE.

You may depend upon my secrecy.

SIR BASHFULL.

I am for ever obliged to you. A foolish woman! how she stands in her own light?

LOVEMORE.

Truly I think she does. But since I have no interest with her ladyship, I shall now found a retreat, and leave matters to your own discretion. Success attend you. (*going*)

SIR BASHFULL.

You must not forsake me in this distress.

LOVEMORE.

Had your lady proved tractable, I should not have cared how long I had staid. But since things are come to this pass, I shall now go and see what kind of reception I am to meet with from Mrs. Lovemore.

SIR

SIR BASHFULL.

Don't let her know that you have a regard for her.

LOVEMORE.

Oh! no; I see the consequence.—(*aside*) Well off this time; and Madam Fortune, if I trust you again, you shall play me what prank you please. Sir Bashfull, your's. (*going*)

SIR BASHFULL.

A thousand thanks to you. And harkye, if I can serve you with your lady——

LOVEMORE.

I am much obliged to you: but I shall endeavour to go on, without giving you the trouble of assisting me. And do you hear? assure my Lady Constant that I meant nothing but to serve your interest.

[*Exit.*

SIR BASHFULL.

Rely upon my management. I can acquit you.—My Lady Constant! Lady Constant!—Let me chase her from thoughts: can I do it? Rage, fury, love——no more of love! I am glad she tore the letter. Odso! yonder it lies. It is only torn in two, and she may still piece the fragments together. I'll pick up the letter this moment: it shall never appear in evidence against me. As to Sir Brilliant, his motions shall be watched: I know how to proceed with Madam, and if I can but prove the fact, every body will say that I am ill used by her.

End of the FOURTH ACT.

A C T the F I F T H.

Scene, an Apartment at Mr. LOVEMORE'S.

Enter Mrs. LOVEMORE, elegantly dress'd; MUSLIN following her.

MUSLIN.

WHY to be sure, Ma'am, it is so for certain, and you are very much in the right of it.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I fancy I am: I see the folly of my former conduct. I am determined never to let my spirits sink into a melancholy state again.

MUSLIN.

Why, that's the very thing, Ma'am; the very thing I have been always preaching up to you. Did not I always say, see company, Ma'am, take your pleasure, and never break your heart for any man? This is what I always said.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

And you have said enough: spare yourself the trouble now.

MUSLIN.

I always said so! And what did the world say? Heavens bless her for a sweet woman! and a plague go with him for an inhuman, barbarous, bloody—murdering brute,

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Well, truce with your impertinence; your tongue runs on at such a rate.

MUSLIN.

Nay, don't be angry: they did say so indeed. But dear heart, how every body will be over joy'd, when they find you have pluck'd up a little! As for me, it gives me new life, to have so much company in the house, and such a racketting at the door with coaches and chairs, enough to hurry a body out of one's wits. Lard, this is another thing, and you look quite like another thing, Ma'am, and that dress quite becomes you. I suppose, Ma'am, you will never wear your negligée again. It is not fit for you indeed, Ma'am. It might pass very well with some folks, Ma'am, but the like of you—

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Will you never have done? Go and see who is coming up stairs.

Enter Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Mrs. Bellmour, I revive at the sight of you. Muslin, do you step, and do as I ordered you.

MUSLIN.

What the deuce can she be at now? [Exit.]

Mrs BELLMOUR.

You see I am punctual to my time.—Well I admire your dress of all things.—It's mighty pretty.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I am glad you like it. But under all this appearance of gaiety, I have at the bottom but an aching heart.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Be ruled by me, and I'll answer for the event. Why really, now you look just as you shou'd do.—Why neglect so fine a figure?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You are so obliging!

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

And so true!—What was beautiful before, is now heightened by the additional ornaments of dress; and if you will but animate and inspire the whole by those graces of the mind which I am sure you possess, the impression cannot fail of being effectual upon all beholders, and even upon the depraved mind of Mr. Lovemore.—You have not seen him since—have you?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

He dined at home, but was soon upon the wing to his usual haunts.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

If he does but come home time enough, depend upon it my plot will take. And have you got together a good deal of company?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Yes; a tolerable party.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

That's right: shew him that you will consult your own pleasure.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

A-propos, as soon as I came home I received a letter from Sir Brilliant, in a stile of warmth and tenderness that would astonish you. He begs to see me again, and has something particular to communicate. I left it in my dressing-room; you shall see it by and by: I took your advice, and sent him word he might come. That lure brought him hither immediately: he makes no doubt of his success with me.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Well! two such friends as Sir Brilliant and Mr. Lovemore, I believe, never existed!

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Their falsehood to each other is unparalleled. I left Sir Brilliant at the card-table: as soon as he can disengage himself, he will quit his company in pursuit of me. I forgot to tell you; my Lady Constant is here.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Is she?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

She is, and has been making the strangest discovery: Mr. Lovemore has had a design there too!

Mrs.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Oh ! I don't doubt him ; but the more proof we have the better.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

There is sufficient proof : you must know, Ma'am, (*a rap at the door*) as I live and breathe, I believe this is Mr. Lovemore.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

If it is, every thing goes on as I could wish.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I hear his voice, it is he. How my heart beats !

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Courage, and the day's our own. He must not see me yet : where shall I run ?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

In there, Ma'am. Make haste ; I hear his step on the stairs.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Success attend you. I am gone.

[*Exit.*

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I am frightened out of my senses. What the event may be I fear to think ; but I must go through with it.

L 2

Enter

Enter LOVEMORE.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You are welcome home, Sir.

LOVEMORE.

Mrs. Lovemore, your servant.

(without looking at her)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

It is somewhat rare to see you at home so early.

LOVEMORE.

I said I should come home, did not I? I always like to be as good as my word.—What could the Widow mean by this usage? to make an appointment, and break it thus abruptly! *(aside)*

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

He seems to muse upon it. *(aside)*

LOVEMORE. *(aside)*

She does not mean to do so treacherous a thing as to jilt me? Oh, Lord! I am wonderfully tired. *(yawns, and sinks into an armed chair)*

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Are you indisposed, my dear?

LOVEMORE.

No, my love; I thank you, I am very well;—a little fatigued only, with jolting over the stones all the way into the city this morning. I have paid a few visits this afternoon.—Confoundedly tired.—Where's William?

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Do you want any thing?

LOVEMORE.

Only my cap and slippers. I am not in spirits, I think. (*yawns*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You never are in spirits at home, Mr. Lovemore.

LOVEMORE.

I beg your pardon: I never am any where more chearful. (*stretching his arms*) I wish I may die if I an't very happy at home,—very (*yawns*) very happy!

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I can hear otherwife. I am informed that Mr. Lovemore is the promoter of mirth and good humour wherever he goes.

LOVEMORE.

Oh! no, you over-rate me; upon my soul you do.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I can hear, Sir, that no person's company is so acceptable to the ladies; that your wit inspires every thing; you have your compliment for one, your smile for another, a whisper for a third, and so on, Sir: you divide your favours, and are every where, but at home, all whim, vivacity, and spirit.

LOVEMORE.

Ho! ho! (*laughing*) how can you talk so? I swear I can't help laughing at the fancy. All whim, vivacity, and spirit! I shall burst my sides. How can you banter one so?—I divide my favours too! —Oh, heavens! I can't stand this raillery: such a description of me!—I that am rather saturnine, of a serious cast, and inclined to be pensive! I can't help laughing at the oddity of the conceit.—Oh Lord! Oh Lord! (*laughs*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Just as you please, Sir. I see that I am ever to be treated with indifference.

(*walks across the stage*)

LOVEMORE.

(*Rises and walks the contrary way.*)

I can't put this Widow Bellmour out of my head;
(*aside*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

If I had done any thing to provoke this usage, this cold, determined contempt—(*walking*)

LOVEMORE.

I wish I had done with that business entirely; but my desires are kindled, and must be satisfied. (*aside*)

(*They walk for some time silently by each other.*)

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

What part of my conduct gives you offence, Mr. Lovemore?

LOVEMORE.

Still harping upon that ungrateful string!—but prithee don't set me a laughing again.—Offence! ---nothing gives me offence, child!---you know I am very fond---(*yawns and walks*)---I like you of all things, and think you a most admirable wife;---prudent, managing,---careless of your own person, and very attentive to mine;---not much addicted to pleasure,---grave, retired, and domestic; you govern your house; pay the tradesmen's bills, (*yawns*) scold the servants, and love your husband:---upon my soul, a very good wife!---As good a sort of a wife (*yawns*) as a body might wish to have.—Where's William? I must go to bed.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

To bed so early! Had not you better join the company?

LOVEMORE.

I shan't go out to-night,

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

But I mean the company in the dining-room.

LOVEMORE.

Company in the dining-room! (*stares at her*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Yes: I invited them to a rout,

L 4

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

A rout in my house!--and you dressed out too!
---What is all this?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You have no objection I hope.

LOVEMORE.

Objection!--no, I like company, you know, of
all things; I'll go and join them; Who are they all?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You know 'em all; and there's your friend Sir
Brilliant.

LOVEMORE.

Is he there? I shall be glad to see him. But
pray, how comes all this about?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I intend to see company often,

LOVEMORE.

Do you?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Ay, and not look tamely on, while you revel lux-
uriously in a course of pleasure. I shall pursue my
own plan of diversion.

LOVEMORE.

Do so, Ma'am: the change in your temper will
not be disagreeable.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

And so I shall, Sir, I assure ye. Adieu to melancholy, and welcome pleasure, wit and gaiety, *(she walks about and sings.)*

LOVEMORE.

What the devil has come over her? And what in the name of wonder does all this mean?

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Mean, Sir!—It means, it means—how can you ask me what it means?—Well, to be sure, the sobriety of that question!—Do you think a woman of spirit can have leisure to tell her meaning, when she is all air, alertness, rapture and enjoyment?

LOVEMORE.

She's mad!—Stark mad!

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

You're mistaken, Sir,—not mad, but in spirits, that's all. Am I too flighty for you?—Perhaps I am: you are of a saturnine disposition, inclin'd to think a little, or so. Well, don't let me interrupt you; don't let me be of any inconvenience. That would be the unpolitest thing; a married couple to be interfering and encroaching on each other's pleasures! Oh hideous! it would be Gothic to the last degree. Ha! ha! ha!

LOVEMORE. *(forcing a laugh)*

Ha! ha!—Ma'am, you—ha! ha! you are perfectly right.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Nay, but I don't like that laugh now: I positively don't like it. Can't you laugh out as you were used to do? For my part, I'm determined to do nothing else all the rest of my life.

LOVEMORE.

This is the most astonishing thing! Ma'am I don't rightly comprehend——

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Oh Lud! oh Lud!---with that important face! Well, but come! what don't you comprehend?

LOVEMORE.

There is something in this treatment that I don't so well——

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Oh! are you there, Sir! How quickly they, who have no sensibility for the peace and happiness of others, can feel for themselves, Mr. Lovemore!--- But that's a grave reflection, and I hate reflection,

LOVEMORE.

What has she got into her head? This sudden change, Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you——

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Nay, don't be frighten'd: there is no harm in innocent mirth, I hope; never look so grave upon it, I assure you, Sir, that though, on your part, you seem deter-

determined to offer constant indignities to your wife, and though the laws of retaliation wou'd in some sort exculpate her, if, when provok'd to the utmost, exasperated beyond all enduring, she should, in her turn, make him know what it is to receive an injury in the tenderest point—

LOVEMORE,

Madam! (*angrily*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE,

Well, well, don't be alarmed. I shan't retaliate; my own honour will secure you there; you may depend upon it.—Will you come and play a game at cards? Well, do as you like; you won't come? No, no, I see you won't.—What say you to a bit of supper with us?—Nor that neither?—Follow your inclinations: it is not material where a body eats, you know; the company expects me; adieu, Mr. Lovemore, yours, yours. [*Exit singing.*

LOVEMORE,

This is a frolic I never saw her in before!—Laugh all the rest of my life!—laws of retaliation!—an injury in the tenderest point;—the company expects me, —adieu! yours, yours!—(*mimicking her.*) What the devil is all this? Some of her female friends have been tampering with her. So, so; I must begin to look a little sharp after madam. I'll go this moment into the card-room and watch whom she whispers with, whom she ogles with, and every circumstance that can lead to—(*going*)

Enter

Enter MUSLIN in a hurry.

MUSLIN.

Madam, Madam,—here's your letter; I wou'd not for all the world that my master——

LOVEMORE.

What, is she mad too? What's the matter, woman?

MUSLIN.

Nothing, Sir,---nothing: I wanted a word with my Lady, that's all, Sir.

LOVEMORE.

You wou'd not for the world that your master,---what was you going to say?---What paper's that?

MUSLIN.

Paper, Sir!

LOVEMORE.

Paper, Sir! let me see it.

MUSLIN.

Lord, Sir! how can you ask a body for such a thing. It's a letter to me, Sir, a letter from the country; a letter from my fister, Sir. She bids me to buy her a *Shiver de Fize* cap, and a fixteenth in the lottery; and tells me of a number she dreamt of, that's all, Sir; I'll put it up.

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Let me look at it. Give it me this moment.
(reads) To Mrs. Lovemore!---Brilliant Fashion.
This is a letter from the country, is it?

MUSLIN.

That, Sir---that is---no Sir,---no;---that's not
fister's letter.---If you will give me that back, Sir, I'll
flew you the right one.

LOVEMORE.

Where did you get this?

MUSLIN.

Sir?

LOVEMORE.

Where did you get it?---Tell me truth.

MUSLIN.

Dear heart, you fright a body so---in the parlour,
Sir,---I found it there.

LOVEMORE.

Very well!---leave the room.

MUSLIN.

The devil fetch it, I was never so out in my poli-
ticks, in all my days. [Exit.

LOVEMORE.

A pretty epistle truly! (reads) "When you
com-

“ command me, my dearest Mrs. Lovemore, never to
 “ touch again upon the subject of my love, you
 “ command an impossibility. You excite the flame,
 “ and forbid it to burn. Permit me once more to
 “ throw myself on my knees, and implore your
 “ compassion.”——Compassion with a vengeance
 on him!——“ Think you see me now with tender,
 “ melting, supplicating eyes, languishing at your
 “ feet.”——Very well, Sir!——“ Can you find it
 “ in your heart to persist in cruelty?---Grant me
 “ but access to you once more, and in addition to
 “ what I already said this morning, I will urge such
 “ motives”---Urge motives, will ye?---“ as will
 “ convince you, that you should no longer hesitate
 “ in gratitude, to reward him, who here makes a
 “ vow of eternal constancy and love.

“ BRILLIANT FASHION.”

So! so! so! your very humble servant, Sir Brilliant Fashion!——This is your friendship for me, is it?---you are mighty kind indeed, Sir,---but I thank you as much as if you had really done me the favour: and, Mrs. Lovemore, I'm your humble servant too. She intends to laugh all the rest of her life! This letter will change her note. Yonder she comes along the gallery, and Sir Brilliant in full chace of her. They come this way. Could I but detect them both now! I'll step aside, and who knows but the devil may tempt them to their undoing. A polite husband I am: there's the coast clear for you, madam. [Exit.

Enter Mrs. LOVEMORE and SIR BRILLIANT.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I have already told you my mind, Sir Brilliant.
 Your

Your civility is odious; your compliments fulsome; and your solicitations insulting.—I must make use of harsh language, Sir: you provoke it.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Not retiring to solitude and discontent again, I hope, madam! Have a care, my dear Mrs. Lovemore, of a relapse.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

No danger, Sir: don't be too solicitous about me. Why leave the company? Let me intreat you to return, Sir.

SIR BRILLIANT.

By Heaven, there is more rapture in being one moment *vis-a-vis* with you, than in the company of a whole drawing-room of beauties. Round you are melting pleasures, tender transports, youthful loves, and blooming graces, all unfelt, neglected, and despised, by a tasteless, cold, unimpassioned husband, while they might be all so much better employed to the purposes of ecstasy and bliss.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I am amazed, Sir, at this liberty.—What action of my life has authorized this assurance?—I desire, Sir, you will desist. Were I not afraid of the ill consequences that might follow, I should not hesitate a moment to acquaint Mr. Lovemore with your whole behaviour.

SIR BRILLIANT.

She won't tell her husband!—A charming creature, and blessings on her for so convenient a hint.
She

She yields, by all my hopes !---What shall I say to overwhelm her senses in a flood of nonsense ? (*aside*)

Go my heart's envoys, tender sighs make haste,---

Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,---

Raptures and paradise

Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press'd.

(forcing her all this time)

Enter Mr. LOVEMORE.

LOVEMORE.

Hell and distraction ! this is too much.

SIR BRILLIANT.

What the devil's the matter now ? (*kneels down to buckle his shoe*) This confounded buckle is always plaguing me. Lovemore ! I rejoice to see thee.

(*looking at each other*)

LOVEMORE.

And have you the confidence to look me in the face ?

SIR BRILLIANT.

I was telling your lady here, of the most whimsical adventure——

LOVEMORE.

Don't add the meanness of falsehood to the black attempt of invading the happiness of your friend. I did imagine, Sir, from the long intercourse that has subsisted between us, that you might have had delicacy enough, feeling enough, honour enough, Sir, not to meditate an injury like this.

SIR

SIR BRILLIANT.

Ay, it's all over, I am detected. (*aside*) Mr. Lovemore, I feel that I have been wrong, and will not attempt a vindication of myself. We have been friends hitherto, and if begging your pardon for this rashness will any ways atone——

LOVEMORE.

No, Sir, nothing can atone. The provocation you have given me, would justify my drawing upon you this instant, did not that lady, and this roof protect you.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Harsh language to a friend——

LOVEMORE.

Friend, Sir Brilliant?

SIR BRILLIANT.

If you will but hear me——

LOVEMORE.

Sir, I insist; I won't hear a word.

SIR BRILLIANT.

I declare upon my honour——

LOVEMORE.

Honour! for shame, Sir Brilliant: honour and friendship are sacred words, and you profane them both.

SIR BRILLIANT.

If imploring forgiveness of that lady——

LOVEMORE.

That lady!---I desire you will never speak to that lady.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Can you command a moment's patience?

LOVEMORE.

Sir, I am out of all patience: this must be settled between us: I have done for the present.

Enter SIR BASHFULL.

SIR BASHFULL.

Did not I hear loud words among you? I certainly did. What are you quarreling about?

LOVEMORE.

Read that, Sir Bashfull. (*Gives him Sir Brilliant's letter*) Read that, and judge if I have not cause--- (*Sir Bashfull reads to himself.*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

Hear but what I have to say——

LOVEMORE.

No, Sir, no; we shall find a fitter time: as for you, Madam, I am satisfied with your conduct. I was indeed a little alarmed, but I have been a witness of

of your behaviour, and I am above harbouring low suspicions.

SIR BASHFULL.

Upon my word, Mr. Lovemore, this is carrying the jest too far.

LOVEMORE.

It is the basest action a gentleman can be guilty of; and to a person who never injured him, still more criminal.

SIR BASHFULL.

Why so I think. Sir Brilliant, *(to him aside)* here take this letter, and read it to him; his own letter to my wife.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Let me see it---*(takes the letter)*

SIR BASHFULL.

'Tis indeed, as you say, the vilest action a gentleman can be guilty of.

LOVEMORE.

An unparalleled breach of friendship.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Not altogether so unparalleled: I believe it will not be found without a precedent---as for example---*(reads)*

To My Lady Constant—

"Why should I conceal, my dear Madam, that your charms have awaken'd my tenderest passions?"

LOVEMORE.

Confusion ! my letter---(*aside*)

SIR BRILLIANT. (*reading*)

" I long have lov'd you, long adored. Could I but
" flatter myself"---(*Lovemore walks about uneasy ;
Sir Brilliant follows him*)

SIR BASHFULL.

There, Mr. Lovemore, the basest treachery !

SIR BRILLIANT. (*Reads*)

" Could I but flatter myself with the least kind return."

LOVEMORE.

Confusion ! let me seize the letter out of his hand.
(*Snatches it from him,*)

SIR BASHFULL.

An unparalleled breach of friendship, Mr. Lovemore.

LOVEMORE.

All a forgery, Sir ; all a forgery.

SIR BASHFULL.

That I deny ; it is the very identical letter my lady
threw away with such indignation. She tore it in
two, and I have pieced it together.

LOVEMORE.

A mere contrivance to varnish his guilt.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Ha ! ha ! my dear Lovemore, we know one another.

ther. Have not you been at the same work with the widow Bellmour?

LOVEMORE.

The widow Bellmour!—If I spoke to her, it was to serve you, Sir.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Are you sure of that?

LOVEMORE.

Po! I won't stay a moment longer among ye. I'll go into another room, to avoid ye all. I know little or nothing of the widow Bellmour, Sir. (*opens the door; Enter Mrs. Bellmour*) Hell and destruction!—what fiend is conjured up here! Zoons! let me make my escape out of the house.

(*runs to the opposite door*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I'll secure this pass: you must not go, my dear.

LOVEMORE.

'Sdeath, Madam, give me way.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Nay, don't be in such a hurry: I want to introduce an acquaintance of mine to you.

LOVEMORE.

I desire, Madam——

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

My Lord, my Lord Etheridge; I am heartily glad to see your Lordship (*taking hold of him*)

M 3

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Do, my dear, let me introduce this lady to you
(*turning him to her*)

LOVEMORE.

Here's the devil and all to do! (*aside*)

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

My Lord, this is the most fortunate encounter!

LOVEMORE.

I wish I was fifty miles off. (*aside*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Mrs. Bellmour, give me leave to introduce Mr.
Lovemore to you (*turning him to her*)

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

No, my dear Ma'am, let me introduce Lord
Etheridge to you. (*pulling him*) My Lord—

SIR BRILLIANT.

In the name of wonder, what is all this?

SIR BASHFULL.

This is another of his intrigues blown up.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

My dear Ma'am you are mistaken? This is my
husband.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Pardon me, Ma'am, 'tis my Lord Etheridge.

Mrs.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

My dear, how can you be so ill-bred in your own house?—Mrs. Bellmour,—this is Mr. Lovemore.

LOVEMORE.

Are you going to toss me in a blanket, Madam?—call up the rest of your people, if you are.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Pshaw! prithee now, my Lord, leave off your humours. Mrs. Lovemore, this is my Lord Etheridge, a lover of mine, who has made proposals of marriage to me.

LOVEMORE.

Confusion! let me get rid of these two furies
(*breaks away from them.*)

SIR BASHFULL.

He has been tampering with her too, has he?

Mrs. BELLMOUR (*follows him.*)

My Lord, I say! my Lord Etheridge! won't your Lordship know me?

LOVEMORE.

This is the most damnable accident! (*aside*)

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

I hope your lordship has not forgot your appointment at my house this evening.

LOVEMORE.

I deserve all this. (*aside*)

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Pray, my Lord, what have I done, that you treat me with this coldness? Come, come, you shall have a wife: I will take compassion on you.

LOVEMORE.

Damnation! I can't stand it. (*aside*)

SIR BASHFULL.

Murder will out: murder will out.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Come, cheer up, my Lord: what the deuce, your dress is alter'd! what's become of the star and the ribband? And so the gay, the florid, the magnificent Lord Etheridge, dwindles down into plain Mr. Lovemore, the married man! Mr. Lovemore, your most obedient, very humble servant, Sir.

LOVEMORE.

I can't bear to feel myself in so ridiculous a circumstance. (*aside*)

SIR BASHFULL.

He has been passing himself for a Lord; has he?

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

I beg my compliments to your friend Mrs. Love-it: I am much obliged to you both for your very honourable designs. (*curtsying to him*)

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

I was never so ashamed in all my life!

SIR BRILLIANT.

So, so, so, all his pains were to hide the star from me. This discovery is a perfect cordial to my dejected spirits.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Mrs. Lovemore, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the providence that directed you to pay me a visit, though I was wholly unknown to you; and I shall henceforth consider you as my deliverer.

LOVEMORE.

Ay, it was she that fainted away in the closet, and be damned to her jealousy. (*aside*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

By all that's whimsical, an odd sort of an adventure this. My Lord, (*advances to him*) my Lord, my Lord Etheridge, as the man says in the play, "Your Lordship is right welcome back to Denmark."

LOVEMORE.

Now he comes upon me.—Oh! I'm in a fine situation. (*aside*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

My Lord, I hope that ugly pain in your Lordship's side is abated.

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Abfurd, and ridiculous. (*afide*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

There is nothing forming there I hope, my Lord.

LOVEMORE.

I fhall come to an explanation with you, Sir.

SIR BRILLIANT.

The tennis-ball from Lord Rackett's unlucky left hand!

LOVEMORE.

No more at present, Sir Brilliant. I leave you now to yourselves, and (*goes to the door in the back fcene*)—'fdeath another fiend! I am befet by them.

Enter LADY CONSTANT.

LOVEMORE.

No way to efcape?—(*attempts both ftage doors, and is prevented*)

LADY CONSTANT.

Mr. Lovemore, it is the luckieft thing in the world, that you are come home.

LOVEMORE.

Ay, it's all over—all muft come to light.

LADY CONSTANT.

I have loft every rubber; quite broke; four by
honours

honours against me every time. Do, Mr. Lovemore, lend me another hundred.

LOVEMORE.

I would give a hundred pound you were all in Lapland. (*aside*)

LADY CONSTANT.

Mrs. Lovemore, let me tell you, you are married to the falsest man; he has deceived me strangely.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

I begin to feel for him, and to pity his uneasiness.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Never talk of pity; let him be probed to the quick.

SIR BASHFULL.

The case is pretty plain, I think, now, Sir Brilliant.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Pretty plain, upon my soul. Ha! ha!

LOVEMORE.

I'll turn the tables upon Sir Bashfull, for all this—(*takes Sir Bashfull's letter out of his pocket*) where is the mighty harm now in this letter?

SIR BASHFULL.

Where's the harm?

LOVE-

LOVEMORE. (*reads*)

" *I cannot, my dearest life, any longer behold—*

SIR BASHFULL.

Shame and confusion ! I am undone. (*aside*)

LOVEMORE.

Hear this, Sir Bashfull—" *The manifold vexations,*
" *of which, thro' a false prejudice, I am myself the oc-*
" *casion.*

LADY CONSTANT.

What is all this ?

SIR BASHFULL.

I am a lost man. (*aside*)

LOVEMORE.

Mind, Sir Bashfull. " *I am therefore resolved,*
" *after many conflicts with myself, to throw off the*
" *mask, and frankly own a passion, which the fear of*
" *falling into ridicule has in appearance suppressed."*

SIR BASHFULL.

'Sdeath ! I'll hear no more of it. (*snatches at the letter*)

LOVEMORE.

No, Sir ; I resign it here, where it was directed.

LADY CONSTANT.

It is his hand sure enough.

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Yes, Madam, and those are his sentiments, which he explained to me more at large.

LADY CONSTANT. (*reads*)

“ Accept the presents which I myself have sent you ;
 “ money, attendance, equipage, and every thing else you
 “ shall command ; and in return, I shall only entreat you
 “ to conceal from the world that you have raised a flame
 “ in this heart, which will ever shew me,

“ Your admirer,

“ And your truly affectionate husband,

“ BASHFULL CONSTANT.”

ALL.

Ha ! ha !——

SIR BRILLIANT.

So, so, so ! he has been in love with his wife all this time, has he ? Sir Bashfull, will you go and see the new comedy with me ?

SIR BASHFULL.

I shall blush through the world all the rest of my life. (*aside*)

SIR BRILLIANT.

Lovemore, don't you think it a base thing to invade the happiness of a friend ? or to do him a clandestine wrong ? or to injure him with the woman he loves ?

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

To cut the matter short with you, Sir, we have been traitors to each other; a couple of unprincipled, unreflecting profligates!

SIR BRILLIANT.

Profligates!

LOVEMORE.

Ay! both! we are pretty fellows indeed!

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

I am glad to find you are awakened to a sense of your error.

LOVEMORE.

I am, Madam, and I am frank enough to own it. I am above attempting to disguise my feelings, when I am conscious they are on the side of truth and honour. With the sincerest remorse, I ask your pardon.—I should ask pardon of my Lady Constant too, but the fact is, Sir Bashfull threw the whole affair in my way; and, when a husband will be ashamed of loving a valuable woman, he must not be surprized if other people take her case into consideration, and love her for him.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Why, faith that does in some sort make his apology.

SIR BASHFULL.

Sir Bashfull! Sir Bashfull! thou art ruined!

(aside)

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Well, Sir, upon certain terms, I don't know but I may sign and seal your pardon.

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

Terms!—what terms!

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

That you make due expiation of your guilt to that lady. (*pointing to Mrs. Lovemore*)

LOVEMORE.

That lady, Ma'am!—That lady has no reason to complain.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

No reason to complain, Mr. Lovemore!

LOVEMORE.

No, Madam, none! for whatever may have been my imprudences, they have had their source in your conduct.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

In my conduct, Sir!

LOVEMORE.

In your conduct!—I here declare before this company, and I am above misrepresenting the matter; I here declare, that no man in England could be better inclined to domestic happiness, if you, Madam, on your part, had been willing to make home agreeable.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

There I confess he touches me. (*aside*)

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

You could take pains enough before marriage ; you would put forth all your charms ; practice all your arts ; and make your features please by rule ; for ever changing ; running an eternal round of variety : and all this to win my affections : but when you had won them, you did not think them worth your keeping ; neverdressed, pensive, silent, melancholy ; and the only entertainment in my house, was the dear pleasure of a dull conjugal *tete-à-tete* ; and all this insipidity, because you think the sole merit of a wife consists in her virtue : a fine way of amusing a husband, truly !

SIR BRILLIANT.

Upon my soul, and so it is——(*laughing*)

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Sir, I must own there is too much truth in what you say. This lady has opened my eyes, and convinced me there was a mistake in my former conduct.

LOVEMORE.

Come, come, you need say no more. I forgive you ; I forgive.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

Forgive ! I like that air of confidence, when you know that, on my side, it is at worst an error in judgment ; whereas on yours——

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Po ! po ! never stand disputing : you know each other's

other's faults and virtues: you have nothing to do but to mend the former, and enjoy the latter. There, there, there, kifs and friends. There, Mrs. Lovemore, take your reclaimed libertine to your arms.

LOVEMORE.

'Tis in your power, Madam, to make a reclaimed libertine of me indeed.

Mrs. LOVEMORE.

From this moment it shall be our mutual study to please each other.

LOVEMORE.

A match with all my heart. I shall hereafter be ashamed only of my follies, but never ashamed of owning that I sincerely love you.

SIR BASHFULL.

Shan't you be ashamed?

LOVEMORE.

Never, Sir.

SIR BASHFULL.

And will you keep me in countenance?

LOVEMORE.

I will.

SIR BASHFULL.

Give me your hand. I now forgive you all. My Lady Constant, I own the letter, I own the senti-
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ments of it, (*embraces her*) and from this moment I take you to my heart.—Lovemore, Zookers! you have made a man of me.

LADY CONSTANT.

If you hold in this humour, Sir Bashfull, our quarrels are at an end.

SIR BRILLIANT.

And now I suppose I must make restitution here —(*gives Lady Constant the buckles*)

SIR BASHFULL.

Ay, ay, make restitution. Lovemore! this is the consequence of his having some tolerable phrase, and a person, Mr. Lovemore! ha! ha!—

SIR BRILLIANT.

Why, I own the laugh is against me. With all my heart; I am glad to see my friends happy at last. Lovemore, may I presume to hope for pardon at that lady's hands? (*points to Mrs. Lovemore*)

LOVEMORE.

My dear confederate in vice, your pardon is granted. Two sad libertines we have been. But come, give us your hand: we have used each other scurvily: for the future we will endeavour to atone for the errors of our past misconduct.

SIR BRILLIANT.

Agreed; we will henceforward behave like men, who have not forgot the obligations of truth and honour.

LOVE-

LOVEMORE.

And now I congratulate the whole company, that this business has had so happy a tendency to convince each of us of our folly.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

Pray, Sir, don't draw me into a share of your folly.

LOVEMORE.

Come, come, my dear Ma'am, you are not without your share of it. This will teach you for the future, to be content with one lover at a time, without listening to a fellow you know nothing of, because he assumes a title, and spreads a fair report of himself.

Mrs. BELLMOUR.

The reproof is just, I grant it.

LOVEMORE.

Come, let us join the company chearfully, keep our own secrets, and not make ourselves the town-talk.

SIR BASHFULL.

Ay, ay; let us keep the secret.

LOVEMORE.

What, returning to your fears again? You will put me out of countenance, Sir Bashfull.

SIR BASHFULL.

I have done.

LOVEMORE.

When your conduct is fair and upright, never be afraid of ridicule. Real honour and generous affection may bid defiance to all the small wits in the kingdom. In my opinion, were the business of this day to go abroad into the world, it would prove a very useful lesson: the men would see how their passions may carry them into the danger of wounding the bosom of a friend: and the ladies would learn, that, after the marriage rites are performed, they ought not to suffer their powers of pleasing to languish away, but should still remember to sacrifice to the Graces.

*To win a man, when all your pains succeed,
The Way to Keep Him is a task indeed.*

F I N I S.

SONG

SONG for Mrs. CIBBER in the WAY TO
KEEP HIM.

Written, at the revival of the play, by Mr. GARRICK.

I.

*YE fair married dames, who so often deplore,
That a lover once blest, is a lover no more;
Attend to my counsel, nor blush to be taught,
That prudence must cherish, what beauty has caught.*

II.

*The bloom of your cheek, and the glance of your eye,
Your roses and lilies, may make the men sigh:
But roses, and lilies, and sighs pass away,
And passion will die, as your beauties decay.*

III.

*Use the man that you wed, like your fav'rite GUITTAR,
Tho' music in both, they are both apt to jar;
How tuneful and soft from a delicate touch,
Not handled too roughly, nor play'd on too much!*

IV.

*The SPARROW and LINNET will feed from your hand,
Grow tame by your kindness, and come at command:
Exert with your husband the same happy skill,
For hearts, like your birds, may be tam'd to your will.*

V.

*Be gay and good-humour'd, complying and kind,
Turn the chief of your care from your face to your mind:
'Tis there that a wife may her conquests improv,
And HYMEN shall rivet the fetters of LOVE.*

SONG for Mrs. Clark in the Way to
Kearney.

Written at the request of the pl. by W. G. Clark.

It is a song of love, and of the love of God.

It is a song of love, and of the love of God.

It is a song of love, and of the love of God.

It is a song of love, and of the love of God.

It is a song of love, and of the love of God.

It is a song of love, and of the love of God.

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It is a song of love, and of the love of God.

It is a song of love, and of the love of God.

It is a song of love, and of the love of God.

All in the Wrong:

A

COMEDY,

Performed at the

THEATRE ROYAL

IN

DRURY-LANE.

In amore hæc omnia infunt vitia; injuriæ,
Suspiciones, inimicitia, induciæ,
Bellum, pax rursum.

TERENCE.

All in the Wrong:

COMEDY,

Performed at the

THEATRE ROYAL

IN

DURRY-LANE.

Belham, pax talem.
Suspicionis, indignitatis, injuriarum,
In amore-hoc omnia instat vitiis; injuriarum.

TERENCE.

P R O L O G U E.

Written and spoken by SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq;

*T*O-Night, be it known to Box, Gall'ry, and Pit,
 Will be open'd the best * Summer-Warehouse for Wit;
 The New Manufacture, Foote and Co. Undertakers;
 Play, Pantomime, Opera, Farce,—by the Makers!
 We scorn, like our brethren, our fortunes to owe
 To Shakespeare, and Southern, to Otway, and Rowe.
 Though our judgment may err, yet our justice is shewn,
 For we promise to mangle no works but our own.
 And moreover on this you may firmly rely,
 If we can't make you laugh, that we won't make you cry.
 For Roscius, who knew we were mirth-loving souls,
 Has lock'd up his lightning, his daggers, and bows.
 Resolv'd that in buskins no hero shall stalk,
 He has shut us quite out of the Tragedy walk.
 No blood, no blank verse!—and in short we're undone,
 Unless you're contented with Frolic and Fun.

If tir'd of her round in the Ranelagh-mill,
 There should be but one female inclin'd to sit still;
 If blind to the beauties, or sick of the squall,
 A party should shun to catch cold at Vauxhall;
 If at Sadler's sweet Wells the made wine should be thick,
 The cheese-cakes turn sour, or Miss Wilkinson sick;
 If the fume of the pipes should oppress you in June,
 Or the tumblers be lame, or the bells out of tune;
 I hope you will call at our warehouse in Drury;
 We've a curious assortment of goods, I assure you;
 Domestic and foreign, and all kinds of wares;
 English cloths, Irish linnen, and French petenlairs!

* Mr. Garrick, at this time, had let his playhouse for the summer months.

If

*If for want of good custom, or losses in trade,
The poetical partners should bankrupts be made;
If from dealings too large, we plunge deeply in debt,
And WHEREAS issue out in the Muses Gazette;
We'll on you our assigns for CERTIFICATES call;
Though insolvent, we're honest, and give up our all.*

Dramatis Personæ,

M E N.

Sir JOHN RESTLESS,	Mr. YATES.
BEVERLEY,	Mr. O'BRIEN.
Sir WILLIAM BELLMONT,	Mr. BURTON.
Young BELLMONT,	Mr. PACKER.
BLANDFORD,	Mr. BRANSBY.
ROBERT, Servant to Sir JOHN,	Mr. BLAKES.
BRUSH, Servant to BEVERLY,	Mr. WESTON.

W O M E N.

Lady RESTLESS,	Miss HAUGHTON.
BELINDA,	Mrs. YATES.
CLARISSA,	Mrs. PALMER.
TATTLE,	Mrs. BRADSHAW.
TIPPET,	Miss HIPPISEY.
MARMALET,	Miss MILLS.

All in the Wrong.

A COMEDY.

ACT the FIRST.

SCENE *the PARK.*

Enter Sir JOHN RESTLESS and ROBERT, from a house in the side scene.

Sir JOHN.

SIR John Restless! Sir John Restless! thou hast played the fool with a vengeance. What devil whispered thee to marry such a woman? — Robert, you have been a faithful servant, and I value you. Did your lady go out at this door here into the park, or did she go out at the street door?

ROBERT.

This door, Sir.

Sir

Sir JOHN.

Robert, I will never live in a house again that has two doors to it.

ROBERT.

Sir!

Sir JOHN.

I will give warning to my landlord instantly. The eyes of Argus are not sufficient to watch the motions of a wife, where there is a street door, and a back door, to favour her escapes.

ROBERT.

Upon my word, Sir, I wish—you will pardon my boldness, Sir,—I wish you would shake off this uneasiness that preys upon your spirits. It grieves me to the heart,—it does, indeed, Sir, to see you in this way: banish your suspicions: you have conceived some strange aversion, I am afraid, to my lady, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

No, Robert; no aversion: in spite of me I doat upon her still.

ROBERT.

Then why will you not think generously, Sir, of the person you love? My lady, I dare be sworn—

Sir JOHN.

Is false to me. That embitters my whole life. I love her, and she repays me with ingratitude, with perfidy, with falsehood, with——

Ro-

ROBERT.

I dare be sworn, Sir, she is a woman of honour.

Sir JOHN.

Robert, I have considered you as a friend in my house : don't you betray me too : don't attempt to justify her.

ROBERT.

Dear Sir, if you will but give me leave : you have been an indulgent master to me, and I am only concerned for your welfare. You married my lady for love, and I have heard you so warm in her praise : why will you go back from those sentiments ?

Sir JOHN:

Yes, I married her for love—Oh ! love ! love ! what mischief dost thou not occasion in this world ? Yes, Robert, I married her for love. When first I saw her, I was not so much struck with her beauty, as with that air of an ingenuous mind that appeared in her countenance ; her features did not so much charm me with their symmetry, as that expression of sweetness, that smile that indicated affability, modesty, and compliance. But, honest Robert, I was deceived : I was not a month married, when I saw her practising those very smiles at her glass : I saw through the artifice ; plainly saw there was nothing natural in her manner, but all forced, all studied, put on with her head-dress : I was alarmed ; I resolved to watch her from that moment, and I have seen such things !

Ro-

ROBERT.

Upon my word, Sir, I believe you wrong her, and wrong yourself: you build on groundless surmises; you make yourself unhappy, and my lady too; and by being constantly uneasy, and never shewing her the least love, you'll forgive me, Sir,—you fill her mind with strange suspicions, and so the mischief is done.

Sir JOHN.

Suspensions, Robert?

ROBERT.

Yes, Sir, strange suspicions!—My lady finds herself treated with no degree of tenderness; she infers that your inclinations are fixed elsewhere, and so she is become—you will pardon my blunt honesty—she is become downright jealous,—as jealous as yourself, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

Oh! Robert, you are little read in the arts of women; you little know the intricacies of their conduct; the mazes through which they walk, shifting, turning, winding, running into devious paths, but tending all through a labyrinth to the temple of Venus. You cannot see, that all her pretences to suspect me of infidelity are merely a counter-plot to cover her own loose designs: it is but a gauze covering, though; it is seen through, and only serves to shew her guilt the more.

ROBERT.

Upon my word, Sir John, I cannot see——

Sir

Sir JOHN.

No, Robert ; I know you can't. Her suspicions of me all make against her ; they are female stratagems, and yet it is but too true that she still is near my heart. Oh ! Robert, Robert, when I have watched her at a play, or elsewhere ; when I have counted her oglings, and her whisperings, her stolen glances, and her artful leer, with the cunning of her sex, she has pretended to be as watchful of me : dissembling, false, deceitful woman !

ROBERT.

And yet, I dare assure you——

Sir JOHN.

No more ; I am not to be deceived ; I know her thoroughly, and now,—now—has not she escaped out of my house, even now ?

ROBERT.

But with no bad design.

Sir JOHN.

I am the best judge of that : which way did she go ?

ROBERT.

Across the Park, Sir ; that way, towards the Horse-guards.

Sir JOHN.

Towards the Horse-guards !——there,—there,—there, the thing is evident : you may go in, Robert.

Ro-

ROBERT.

Indeed, Sir, I——

Sir JOHN.

Go in, I say; go in.

ROBERT.

There is no persuading him to his own good.

[*Exit.*]

Sir JOHN *alone*

Gone towards the Horse-guards! my head aches; my forehead burns; I am cutting my horns. Gone towards the Horse-guards!—I'll pursue her thither; if I find her, the time, the place, all will inform against her. Sir John! Sir John; you were a mad-man to marry such a woman. [*Exit.*]

Enter BEVERLEY and BELLMONT, at opposite sides.

BEVERLEY.

Ha! my dear Bellmont? A fellow sufferer in love is a companion well met.

BELLMONT.

Beverley! I rejoice to see you.

BEVERLEY.

Well! I suppose the same cause has brought us both into the park: both come to sigh our amorous vows in the friendly gloom of yonder walk. Belinda keeps a perpetual war of love and grief, and hope and fear in my heart: and let me see—(*lays his hand*

on Bellmont's breast) how fares all here? I fancy my sister is a little busy with you.

BELLMONT.

Busy! she makes a perfect riot there. Not one wink the whole night. Oh! Clarissa, her form so animated! her eyes so——

BEVERLEY.

Prithee! truce; I have not leisure to attend to her praise: a sister's praise too! the greatest merit I ever could see in Clarissa is, that she loves you freely and sincerely.

BELLMONT.

And to be even with you, Sir, your Belinda! upon my soul, notwithstanding all your lavish praises, her highest perfection, in my mind, is her sensibility to the merit of my friend.

BEVERLEY.

Oh! Bellmont! such a girl!

Scarce can I to heav'n excuse

The devotion which I use

Unto that adored dame!

But tell me honestly now, do you think she has ever betrayed the least regard for me?

BELLMONT.

How can you, who have such convincing proofs, how can you ask such a question? That uneasiness of yours, that inquietude of mind——

BEVERLEY.

Prithee don't fix that character upon me.

BELLMONT.

It is your character, my dear Beverley : instead of enjoying the object before you, you are ever looking back to something past, or conjecturing about something to come, and are your own self tormentor.

BEVERLEY.

No, no, no ; don't be so severe : I hate the very notion of such a temper : the thing is, when a man loves tenderly as I do, sollicitude and anxiety are natural ; and when Belinda's father opposes my warmest wishes——

BELLMONT.

Why yes, the good Mr. Blandford is willing to give her in marriage to me.

BEVERLEY.

The senseless old dotard !

BELLMONT.

Thank you for the compliment ! and my father, the wise Sir William Bellmont——

BEVERLEY.

Is a tyrannical, positive, headstrong——

BELLMONT.

There again I thank you. But in short the old couple, Belinda's father and mine, have both agreed upon the match. They insist upon compliance from their children ; so that according to their wise heads, I am to be married off-hand to Belinda, and you and
your

your sister, poor Clarissa, are to be left to shift for yourselves.

BEVERLEY.

Racks and torment !

BELLMONT.

Racks and torment !—Seas of milk and ships of amber, man !—We are failing to our wished for harbour, in spite of their machinations. I have settled the whole affair with Clarissa.

BEVERLEY.

Have you ?

BELLMONT.

I have, and to-morrow morning makes me possessor of her charms.

BEVERLEY.

My dear boy give us your hand : and then, thou dear rogue, and then Belinda's mine ! *Loll-toll-loll—*

BELLMONT.

Well may you be in raptures, Sir ; for here, here, here they both come.

Enter BELINDA, *and* CLARISSA.

BEVERLEY.

Grace was in all her steps ; heav'n in her eye ;
In every gesture dignity and love.—

BELINDA:

A poetical reception truly!—But can't your passion inspire you to a composition of your own, Mr. Beverley?

BEVERLEY.

It inspires me with sentiments, Madam, which I can't find words to express. Suckling, Waller, Landdown, and all our dealers in love-verses, give but a faint image of a heart touched like mine.

BELINDA.

Poor gentleman! what a terrible taking you are in! But if the sonneteers cannot give an image of you, Sir, have you had recourse to a painter, as you promised me?

BEVERLEY.

I have, Belinda, and here,——here is the humble portrait of your adorer.

BELINDA. (*takes the picture*)

Well! there is a likeness; but after all, there is a better painter than this gentleman, whoever he be.

BEVERLEY.

A better!——now she is discontented. (*aside*) Where, Madam, can a better be found?——If money can purchase him——

BELINDA.

Oh! Sir, when he draws for money he never succeeds. But when pure inclination prompts him, then

then his colouring is warm indeed. He gives a portrait that endears the original.—

BEVERLEY.

Such an artist is worth the Indies!

BELINDA.

You need not go so far to seek him: he has done your business already. The limner I mean is a certain little blind god, called Love, and he has stamped such an impression of you here—

BEVERLEY.

Madam, your most obedient: and I can tell you, that the very same gentleman has been at work for you too.—

BELLMONT.

(who had been talking apart with Clarissa)

Oh! he has had a world of business upon his hands, for we two have been agreeing what havock he has made with us.

CLARISSA.

Yes, but we are but in a kind of fool's paradise here: all our schemes are but mere castle-building, which your father, Mr. Bellmont, and my dear Belinda,—yours too are most obstinately determined to destroy.

BELLMONT.

Why, as you say, they are determined that I shall have the honour of Belinda's hand in the country-dance of matrimony.

BELINDA.

Without considering that I may like another partner better.

BEVERLEY.

And without considering that I, forlorn as I am, and my sister, there—who is as well inclined to a matrimonial game of romps as any girl in Christendom, must both of us sit down, and bind our brows with willow, in spite of our strongest inclinations to mingle in the groupe.

BELLMONT.

But we have planned our own happiness, and with a little resolution we shall be successful in the end I warrant you. Clarissa, let us take a turn this way, and leave that love-sick pair to themselves: they are only fit company for each other, and we may find wherewithal to entertain ourselves.

CLARISSA.

Let us try: turn this way.

BELINDA.

Are you going to leave us, Clarissa?

CLARISSA.

Only just fauntering into this side-walk: we shan't lose one another.

BELINDA.

You are such a tender couple! you are not tired
I see

I see of saying pretty soft things to each other.
Well! well! take your own way.

CLARISSA.

And if I guess right, you are glad to be left together.

BELINDA.

Who I?

CLARISSA.

Yes, you; the coy Belinda!

BELINDA.

Not I truly: let us walk together.

CLARISSA.

No, no, by no means: you shall be indulged.
Adieu!—we shall be within call.

[*Exeunt Bellmont and Clarissa.*]

BEVERLEY.

My sister is generously in love with Bellmont: I wish Belinda would act as openly towards me. (*aside*)

BELINDA.

Well, Sir!—Thoughtful! I'll call Mr. Bellmont back, if that is the case,

BEVERLEY.

She will call him back. (*aside*)

BELINDA.

Am I to entertain you, or you me?

BEVERLEY.

Madam I

BELINDA.

Madam!—ha! ha! why you look as if you were frightened: are you afraid of being left alone with me?

BEVERLEY.

Oh! Belinda, you know that is the happiness of my life;—but——

BELINDA.

But what, Sir?

BEVERLEY.

Have I done any thing to offend you?

BELINDA.

To offend me?

BEVERLEY.

I should have been of the party last night; I own I should; it was a sufficient inducement to me that you was to be there; it was my fault, and you I see are piqued at it.

BELINDA.

I piqued!

BEVERLEY.

I see you are; and the company perceived it last night.

night. I have heard it all: in mere resentment you directed all your discourse to Mr. Bellmont.

BELINDA.

If I did it was merely accidental.

BEVERLEY.

No, it was deliberately done: forgive my rash folly in refusing the invitation: I meant no manner of harm.

BELINDA.

Who imagines you did, Sir?—

BEVERLEY.

I beg your pardon, Belinda: you take offence too lightly.

BELINDA.

Ha! ha! what have you taken into your head now? This uneasiness is of your own making: I have taken nothing ill, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

You could not but take it ill; but by all that's amiable about you, I meant not to incur your displeasure: forgive that abrupt answer I sent: I should have made a handsomer apology.

BELINDA.

Apology!—you was engaged, was not you?

BEVERLEY.

I said so; I own it, and beg your pardon—

BE-

BELINDA.

Beg my pardon! for what? Ha! ha!

BEVERLEY.

I only meant——

BELINDA.

Ha! ha! can you think I see any thing in your message to be offended at, Sir?

BEVERLEY.

I was wrong: I beg your pardon. Where you were concerned, I own I should have expressed myself with more delicacy, than those hasty words, I am engaged, and can't wait upon you to-night. I should have told you that my heart was with you, though necessity dragged me another way: this omission you re-sented. I could learn, since, what spirits you were in the whole evening, though I enjoyed nothing in your absence. I could hear the fallies of your wit, the sprightliness of your conversation, and on whom your eyes were fixed the whole night.

BELINDA.

They were fixed upon Mr. Bellmont, you think!

BEVERLEY.

Ay! and fixed with delight upon him, negotiating the business of love before the whole company.

BELINDA.

Upon my word, Sir, whoever is your author, you
are

are misinformed. You alarm me with these fancies, and you know I have often told you that you are of too refining a temper: you create for yourself imaginary misunderstandings, and then are ever entering into explanations. But this watching for intelligence, from the spies and misrepresenters of conversation, betrays strong symptoms of jealousy. I would not be married to a jealous man for the world.

BEVERLEY.

Now she's seeking occasion to break off. (*aside*) Jealousy, Ma'am, can never get admission into my breast. I am of too generous a temper: a certain delicacy I own I have; I value the opinion of my friends, and when there are circumstances of a doubtful aspect, I am glad to set things in their true light. And if I do so with others, surely with you, on whom my happiness depends, to desire a favourable interpretation of my words and actions cannot be improper.

BELINDA.

But these little humours may grow up, and gather into the fixed disease of jealousy at last. (*Lady Restless crosses the stage, and rings a bell at the door*) And there now,—there goes a lady who is a victim to her own fretful imagination.

BEVERLEY.

Who is the lady pray?—

BELINDA.

My Lady Restless. Walk this way, and I will give you her whole character. I am not acquainted with her Ladyship, but I have heard much of her. This way.

[*Exeunt Belinda and Beverley.*

Lady

Lady RESTLESS. (*ringing at the door*)

What do these servants mean? There is something going forward here. I will be let in, or I will know the reason why. (*rings again*) But in the mean time, Sir John can let any body he pleases out at the street door: I'll run up the steps here, and observe. [*Exit.*]

TATTLE *opens the door*, MARMALET *follows her*,

TATTLE.

Who rung this bell?—I don't see any body; and yet I am sure the bell rung. Well, Mrs. Marmalet you will be going, I see.

MARMALET.

Yes, Mrs. Tattle; I am obliged to leave you. I'll step across the Park, and I shall soon reach Grosvenor Square. When shall I see you at our house?

TATTLE.

Heaven knows when I shall be able to get out: my Lady leads us all such lives! I wish I had such another place as you have of it.

MARMALET.

I have nothing to complain of.

TATTLE.

No, that you have not: when shall I get such a gown as that you have on by my Lady? She will never fling off such a thing, and give it to a poor servant? Worry, worry, worry herself, and every body else too.

Re-

Re-enter Lady RESTLESS.

Lady RESTLESS.

No; there is nobody stirring that way. What do I see? A huffy coming out of my house!

MARMALET.

Well, I must begone, Mrs. Tattle: fare you well.

Lady RESTLESS.

She is dized out too! why did not you open the door, Tattle, when I rung?

TATTLE.

I came as soon as possible, Madam.

Lady RESTLESS.

Who have you with you here? What is your business, mistress? (*to Marmalet*)

MARMALET.

My business, Madam!

Lady RESTLESS.

In confusion too! The case is plain. You come here after Sir John, I suppose.

MARMALET.

I come after Sir John, Madam!

Lady RESTLESS.

Guilt in her face! yes, after Sir John: and,
Tattle,

Tattle, you are in the plot against me; you were favouring her escape, were you?

TATTLE.

I favour her escape, Madam! What occasion for that? This is Mrs. Marmalet, Madam, an acquaintance of mine, Madam, as good a kind of body as any at all.

Lady RESTLESS.

Oh! very fine, mistress! you bring your creatures after the vile man, do you?

MARMALET.

I assure you, Madam, I am a very honest girl.

Lady RESTLESS.

Oh! I dare say so. Where did you get that gown?

MARMALET.

La! Ma'am! I came by it honestly, my Lady Conquest gave it to me. I live with my Lady Conquest, Madam.

Lady RESTLESS.

What a complexion she has! How long have you lived in London?

MARMALET.

Three years, Madam.

Lady RESTLESS.

In London three years with that complexion! it
can't

can't be : perhaps she is painted : all these creatures paint. You are all so many painted dolls. (*rubs her face with a white handkerchief*) No, it does not come off. So, Mrs. Tattle, you bring your fresh country girls here to my house, do you ?

TATTLE.

Upon my credit, Ma'am——

Lady RESTLESS.

Don't tell me : I see through this affair. Go you about your business, mistress, and let me never see you about my doors again : go, go your ways.

MARMALET.

Lord, Ma'am, I shan't trouble your house. Mrs. Tattle, a good day. Here's a deal to-do, indeed ! I have as good a house as her's to go to, whatever she may think of herself. [*Exit.*]

Lady RESTLESS.

There, there, there ; see there ; she goes off in a huff ! the way with them all. Ay ! I see how it is, Tattle : you false, ungrateful—that gown was never given her by a woman, she had that from Sir John. Where is Sir John ?

TATTLE.

Sir John an't at home, Ma'am.

Lady RESTLESS.

Where is he ? Where is he gone ? When did he go out ?

TATTLE.

TATTLE.

I really don't know, Ma'am.

Lady RESTLESS.

Tattle, I know you fib now. But I'll sift this to the bottom. I'll write to my Lady Conquest to know the truth about that girl that was here but now.

TATTLE.

You will find I told you truth, Madam.

LADY RESTLESS.

Very well, Mrs. Pert. I'll go and write this moment. Send Robert, to give me an account of his master. Sir John, Sir John, you will distract me.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter BELINDA and BEVERLEY.

BELINDA.

Ay! but that quickness, that extreme sensibility is what I am afraid of. I positively would not have a jealous husband for the world.

BEVERLEY.

By heaven! no earthly circumstance shall ever make me think injuriously of you. Jealousy!—ha! ha!—it is the most ridiculous passion!—ha! ha!

BELINDA.

You may laugh, Sir; but I know your over-refining temper too well, and I absolutely will have it
in

in our marriage-articles, that I must not be plagued with your suspicions.

BEVERLEY.

I subscribe, Ma'am.

BELINDA.

I will have no enquiries where I am going to visit; no following me from place to place: and if we should chance to meet, and you should perceive a man of wit, or a pretty fellow, speaking to me, I will not have you fidgetting about on your chair, knitting your brow, and looking at your watch—"My dear, is it not time to go home?—my love, the coach is waiting:"—and then, if you are prevailed upon to stay, I will not have you converse with a "Yes, Sir," and a "No, Sir," for the rest of the evening, and then wrangle with me in the carriage all the way home, and not be commonly civil to me for the rest of the night. I positively will have none of this.

BEVERLEY.

Agreed, Ma'am, agreed——

BELINDA.

And you shan't tell me you are going out of town, and then steal privately to the play, or to Ranelagh, merely to be a spy upon me. I positively will admit no curiosity about my letters. If you were to open a letter of mine, I should never forgive you. I do verily believe, if you were to open my letters I should hate you.

BEVERLEY.

I subscribe to every thing you can ask. You shall have what female friends you please; lose your money to whom you please; dance with what beau you please; ride out with whom you please; go to what china-shop you please; and, in short, do what you please, without my attempting to bribe your footman, or your maid for secret intelligence.

BELINDA.

Oh! Lud! Oh! Lud! that is in the very strain of jealousy. Deliver me! there is my father yonder, and Sir William Bellmont with him. Fly this instant, fly, Mr. Beverley, down that walk; any where.

BEVERLEY.

You promise then——

BELINDA.

Don't talk to me now: what would you be at? I am yours, and only yours; unalterably so. Fly—begone, leave me this moment.

BEVERLEY.

I obey; I am gone. *[Exit.]*

BELINDA.

Now are they putting their wise heads together to thwart all my schemes of happiness: but love, imperious love, will have it otherwise.

Enter

Enter Mr. BLANDFORD and Sir WILLIAM BELLMONT.

Mr. BLANDFORD.

Sir William, since we have agreed upon every thing——

Sir WILLIAM.

Why yes, Mr. Blandford, I think every thing is settled.

Mr. BLANDFORD.

Why then we have only to acquaint the young people with our intentions, and so conclude the affair without delay.

Sir WILLIAM.

That is all, Sir.

Mr. BLANDFORD.

As to my girl, I don't mind her nonsense about Beverley: she must do as I will have her.

Sir WILLIAM.

And my son too, he must follow my directions. As to his telling me of his love for Clarissa, it is all a joke with me. Children must do as their parents will have them.

Mr. BLANDFORD.

Ay! so they must; and so they shall. Hey! here is my daughter. So Belinda!——Well, my girl, Sir William and I have agreed, and you are to prepare for marriage, that's all.

BELINDA.

With Mr. Beverley, Sir?

BLANDFORD.

Mr. Beverley!

BELINDA.

You know you encouraged him yourself, Sir.

BLANDFORD.

Well, well! I have changed my mind on that head: my friend, Sir William, here offers you his son. Do as I advise you: have a care, Belinda, how you disobey my commands.

BELINDA.

But, Sir——

BLANDFORD.

But, Madam, I must and will be obeyed. You don't like him, you say: but I like him, and that's sufficient for you.

Sir WILLIAM.

And so it is, Mr. Blandford. If my son pretended to have a will of his own, I should let him know to the contrary.

BELINDA.

And can you, Sir William, against our inclination force us both?

BLAND-

BLANDFORD.

Hold your tongue, Belinda; don't provoke me. What makes you from home? Go your ways back directly, and settle your mind. I tell you once for all I will have my own way. Come, Sir William, we will step to the lawyer's chambers. Go home, Belinda, and be observant of my commands. Come, Sir William. What did you say? (*to Belinda*) You mutiny, do you? Don't provoke me. You know, Belinda, I am an odd sort of a man when provok'd. Look ye here: mind what I say; I won't reason with you about the matter; my power is absolute, and if you offer to rebel, you shall have no husband at all with my consent. I'll cut you off with a shilling; I'll see you starve; beg an alms; live miserable; die wretched; in short, suffer any calamity without the least compassion from me. If I find you an undutiful girl, I cast you off for ever. So there's one word for all.

[*Exit: Sir William follows him.*]

BELINDA.

What will become of me?—his inhumanity overcomes me quite—I can never consent: the very sight of this picture is enough to forbid it. Oh! Beverley, you are master of my heart. I'll go this instant—and—heavens! I can scarce move. I am ready to faint.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir JOHN.

No tidings of her far or near.

BELINDA.

How I tremble!—I shall fall—no help?

Sir JOHN.

What do I see!—a young lady in distress!

BELINDA.

Oh!——(*faints in his arms, and drops the picture.*)

Sir JOHN.

She is fallen into a fit. Would my servants were in the way.

Lady RESTLESS. (*at her window.*)

Lady RESTLESS.

Where can this barbarous man be gone to?—How!—under my very window!

Sir JOHN.

How cold she is!—quite cold—(*lays his hand to her cheek*)

Lady RESTLESS.

How familiar he is with her!

Sir JOHN.

And yet she looks beautiful still.

Lady RESTLESS.

Does she so?

Sir

Sir JOHN.

Her eyes open—how lovely they look!

Lady RESTLESS.

Traitor!

Sir JOHN.

Her cheek begins to colour. Well, young lady,
how fare you now, my dear?

Lady RESTLESS.

My dear too!

BELINDA.

Heavens! where am I?—

Sir JOHN.

Repose yourself awhile, or will you step into my
house?

Lady RESTLESS.

No, truly, shan't she. Vile man! but I will spoil
your sport. I will come down to you directly, and
flash confusion in your face. [*Exit from above.*

Sir JOHN.

Where do you live, Madam?

BELINDA.

In Queen's-square, Sir, by the side of the Park.

Sir JOHN.

I will wait upon you: trust yourself with me. You look much better now. Lean on my arm. There, there, I will conduct you. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter Lady RESTLESS.

Lady RESTLESS.

Now I'll make one among ye. How! fled! gone! which way? Is not that he, yonder?—No—he went into my house, I dare say, as I came down stairs. Tattle, Tattle, Robert. Will no body answer?

Enter TATTLE.

Lady RESTLESS.

Where is Sir John?

TATTLE.

La! Ma'am, how should I know?

Lady RESTLESS.

Did not he go in this moment?

TATTLE.

No, Ma'am.

Lady RESTLESS.

To be sure you will say so. I'll follow him through the world, or I'll find him out. So, so,—what is here?—This is her picture, I suppose. I will make sure of this at least: this will discover her to me, tho'

tho' she has escaped now. Cruel, false, deceitful
man !

[*Exit.*

TATTLE.

Poor lady ! I believe her head is turned, for my
part. Well ! I am determined I'll look out for ano-
ther place, that's a sure thing I will.

End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T the S E C O N D.

Scene Sir JOHN's House.

Enter Sir JOHN and ROBERT.

Sir JOHN.

ROBERT, where is your lady?

ROBERT.

In her own room, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

Any body with her?

ROBERT.

I can't say, Sir: my lady is not well.

Sir JOHN.

Not well! fatigued with rioting about this town, I suppose. How long has she been at home?

ROBERT.

About an hour, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

About an hour!—very well, Robert, you may retire. (*Exit Robert*) Now will I question her closely. So—so—so—she comes, leaning on her maid: finely dissembled! finely dissembled! But this pretended
illness

illness shall not shelter her from my strict enquiry. Soft a moment! If I could overhear what passes between 'em, it might lead to the truth. I'll work by stratagem. The hypocrite! how she acts her part!
[Exit.]

Enter Lady RESTLESS and TATTLE.

TATTLE.

How are you now, Madam?

LADY RESTLESS.

Somewhat better, Tattle. Reach that chair. Tattle, tell me honestly, does that girl live with Lady Conquest?

TATTLE.

She does, Madam, upon my veracity.

Lady RESTLESS.

Very well! you will be obstinate, I see, but I shall know the truth presently. I shall have an answer from her Ladyship, and then all will come out.

TATTLE.

You will hear nothing, Ma'am, but what I have told you already.

Lady RESTLESS.

Tattle, Tattle, I took you up in the country in hopes gratitude would make you my friend. But you are as bad as the rest of them. Conceal all you know: it is of very little consequence. I now see through the whole affair. Though it is the picture of a man, yet I am not to be deceived: I understand it all. This is some former gallant: the creature gave
this

this to Sir John as a proof that she had no affection for any one but himself. What art he must have had to induce her to this!—I have found him out at last.

Sir JOHN. (*peeping in*)

Sir JOHN.

What does she say?

Lady RESTLESS.

I have seen enough to convince me what kind of man he is. The fate of us poor women is hard: we all wish for husbands, and they are the torment of our lives.

TATTLE.

There is too much truth in what you say, Ma'am.

Sir JOHN.

You join her, do you, Mrs. Iniquity?

Lady RESTLESS.

What a pity it is, Tattle, that poor women should be under severer restraints than the men are!

Sir JOHN.

You repine for want of freedom, do you?

Lady RESTLESS.

Cruel laws of wedlock! The tyrant-husband may triumph in his infidelity. He may securely trample upon all laws of decency and order: it redounds to his credit; gives him a fashionable air of vice, while a poor woman is obliged to submit to his cruelty. She
remains

remains tied to him for life, even though she has reason to entertain a mortal hatred for him.

Sir JOHN.

Oh! very well argued, Madam!

Lady RESTLESS.

What a pity it is, Tattle, that we cannot change our husbands, as we do our ear-rings or our gloves!

Sir JOHN.

There is a woman of spirit!

Lady RESTLESS.

Tattle! will you own the truth to me about that girl?

TATTLE.

I really have told you the truth, Madam.

Lady RESTLESS.

You won't discover, I see: very well! you may go down stairs.

TATTLE.

I assure your Ladyship——

Lady RESTLESS.

Go down stairs.

TATTLE.

Yes, Ma'am.

Lady

Lady RESTLESS.

Would I had never seen my husband's face !

Sir JOHN.

I am even with you : I have as good wishes for you, I assure you.

Lady RESTLESS.

This picture here—Oh the base man !

Sir JOHN.

The picture of her gallant, I suppose.

Lady RESTLESS.

This is really a handsome picture : what a charming countenance ! it is perfumed I fancy : the scent is agreeable.

Sir JOHN.

The jade, how eagerly she kisses it !

Lady RESTLESS.

Why had I not such a dear, dear man, instead of the brute, the monster——

Sir JOHN.

Monster !—She does not mince the matter : plain downright English ! I must contain my rage, and steal upon her meditations—So—so—so—[*Enters on tiptoe.*

Lady RESTLESS.

There is no falsehood in this look.

Sir

Sir JOHN (*looking over her shoulder.*)

Oh! what a handsome dog she has chosen for herself!

Lady RESTLESS.

With you, I could be for ever happy!

Sir JOHN.

You could, could you? (*Snatches the picture.*)

Lady RESTLESS: (*screams out.*)

Mercy on me!—Oh! is it you, Sir?

Sir JOHN.

Now, Madam, now false one, have I caught you?

Lady RESTLESS.

You are come home at last, I find, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

My Lady Restless, my Lady Restless, what can you say for yourself now?

Lady RESTLESS.

What can I say for myself, Sir John?

Sir JOHN.

Ay! Madam! this picture——

Lady RESTLESS.

Yes, Sir, that picture!

Sir

Sir JOHN.

Will be evidence——

Lady RESTLESS.

Of your shame, Sir John.

Sir JOHN.

Of my shame!—'tis very true what she says : yes, Madam, it will be an evidence of my shame ; I feel that but too sensibly. But on your part——

Lady RESTLESS.

You own it then, do you?——

Sir JOHN.

Own it ! I must own it, Madam ; though confusion cover me, I must own it : it is what you have deserved at my hands.

Lady RESTLESS.

I deserve it, Sir John ! find excuses if you will. Cruel, cruel man !——to make me this return at last. I cannot bear it. Oh ! oh ! (*cries*) Such black injustice !

Sir JOHN.

You may weep ; but your tears are lost : they fall without effect. I now renounce you for ever. This picture will justify me to the wide world ; it will shew what a base woman you have been.

Lady

LADY RESTLESS.

What does the man mean?

Sir JOHN.

The picture of your gallant, Madam! the darling of your amorous hours, who gratifies your luxurious appetites abroad, and——

Lady RESTLESS.

Scurrilous wretch! Oh! Sir, you are at your old stratagem I find: recrimination, you think, will serve your turn.

Sir JOHN.

It is a pity, you know, Madam, that a woman should be tied to a man for life, even though she has a mortal hatred for him.

Lady RESTLESS.

Artful hypocrite!

Sir JOHN.

That she can't change her husband as she does her ear-rings or her gloves.

Lady RESTLESS.

Sir John, this is your old device: this won't avail you.

Sir JOHN.

Had the original of this fallen to your lot, you could kiss the picture for ever. You can gloat upon it, Madam, glue your very lips to it.

Lady RESTLESS.

Shallow artifice!

Sir JOHN.

With him you could be for ever happy.

Lady RESTLESS.

This is all in vain, Sir John.

Sir JOHN.

Had such a dear, dear man fallen to your lot, instead of the brute, the monster—Am I a monster? I am, and you have made me so. The world shall know your infamy.

Lady RESTLESS.

Oh! brave it out, Sir, brave it out to the last: harmless, innocent man! you have nothing to blush for, nothing to be ashamed of: you have no intrigues, no private amours abroad. I have not seen any thing, not I.

Sir JOHN.

Madam, I have seen, and I now see your paramour.

Lady RESTLESS.

That air of confidence will be of great use to you, Sir. You have no convenient to meet you under my very window, to loll softly in your arms!

Sir JOHN.

Hey! how!

Lady

Lady RESTLESS.

Her arm thrown carelessly round your neck! Your hand tenderly applied to her cheek.

Sir JOHN.

'Sdeath! that's unlucky—she will turn it against me. (*aside*)

Lady RESTLESS.

You are in confusion, are you, Sir? But why should you? You meant no harm—"You are safe with me, my dear—will you step into my house, my love?"—Yes, Sir, you would fain bring her into my very house.

Sir JOHN.

My Lady Restless, this evasion is mean and poultry. You beheld a young lady in distress.

Lady RESTLESS.

I know it, and you, tender-hearted man, could carefs her out of mere compassion: you could gaze wantonly out of charity; from pure benevolence, of disposition you could convey her to some convenient dwelling. Oh! Sir John, Sir John!

Sir JOHN.

Madam, this well acted passion——

Lady RESTLESS.

Don't imagine she has escaped me, Sir.

Sir JOHN:

You may talk and rave, Ma'am; but depend upon it, I shall spare no pains to do myself justice on this occasion. Nor will I rest till——

Lady RESTLESS.

Oh! fie upon you, Sir John: these artifices——

Sir JOHN.

Nor will I rest, Madam, until I have found, by means of this instrument here in my hand, who your darling is. I will go about it streight. Ungrateful, treacherous woman! [Exit.

Lady RESTLESS.

Yes, go, under that pretext, in pursuit of your licentious pleasures. This ever has been his scheme to cloak his wicked practices: abandoned man! to face me down too, after what my eyes so plainly beheld! I wish I could wring that secret out of Tattle. I'll step to my own room directly, and try by menaces, by wheedling, by fair means, by foul means, by every means, to wrest it from her. [Exit.

Scene the Park.

Enter Sir JOHN and ROBERT.

Sir JOHN.

Come hither, Robert. Look at this picture.

Ro-

ROBERT.

Yes, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

Let me watch his countenance. Well! well!
dost thou know it, Robert?

ROBERT.

'Tis a mighty handsome picture, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

A handsome picture!—(*aside*)

ROBERT.

The finest lady in the land need not desire a hand-
somer man, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

How well he knows the purposes of it!—Well!
well! honest Robert, tell me: well—who is it?—
tell me.

ROBERT.

Sir!

Sir JOHN.

You know whose picture it is: I know you do.
Well! well! who—who—who is it?

ROBERT.

Upon my word, Sir, it is more than I can tell.

Sir JOHN.

Not know! I am convinced you do. So own the truth: don't be a villian; don't.

ROBERT.

As I am an honest man, Sir——

Sir JOHN.

Be an honest man then, and tell me. Did you never see such a smooth faced, fiery eyed, warm-complexioned, taper young fellow here about my house?

ROBERT.

Never, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

Not with my wife!—to drink chocolate of a morning, tea of an evening? Come, honest Robert, I'll give you a lease of a good farm. What say you? A lease for your life—well! well!—you may take your wife's life into the bargain. Well!

ROBERT.

Believe me, Sir John, I never saw——

Sir JOHN.

I'll add your child's life. Come speak out—your own life, your wife's life, and your child's! now! now! a lease for three lives! Now, Robert!

Ro-

ROBERT.

As I hope for mercy I never saw any such a gentleman.

Sir JOHN.

Robert, Robert, you are bribed by my wife.

ROBERT.

No, as I am a sinner, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

And the worst of sinners you will be, if you are a confederate in this plot against my peace and honour. Reflect on that, Robert.

Enter a FOOTMAN.

FOOTMAN.

Pray does not Sir John Restless live somewhere hereabout?

Sir JOHN.

He does, friend; what is your business with him?

FOOTMAN.

My business is with his lady.

Sir JOHN.

I guessed as much. (*aside*)

FOOTMAN:

I have a letter here for my Lady Restless, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

A letter for my Lady!—from whom, pray?

FOOTMAN.

From my Lord Conquest.

Sir JOHN.

My Lord Conquest! very well, friend: you may give the letter to me. I am Sir John Restless: that there is my house. Let me have the letter: I will take care of it.

FOOTMAN.

I was ordered to deliver it into my Lady's own hand.

Sir JOHN.

The devil you was! I must have the letter. I'll buy it of the rascal. (*aside*) Here take this for your trouble, friend, (*gives him money*) And I'll take care of the letter.

FOOTMAN.

I humbly thank your Honour.

[*Exit.*

Sir JOHN.

Now, now, now; let me see what this is. Now my Lady Restless; now false one, now. (*reads*)

“ Madam,

“ My Lady Conquest being gone into the country
 “ for a few days, I have judged it proper to send a
 “ speedy answer to yours, and to assure you, for your
 “ peace of mind, that you need not entertain the
 “ least

“ least suspicion of Marmalet, my Lady’s woman.
 “ She has lived some years in my family, and I
 “ know her by experience to be an honest, trusty girl,
 “ incapable of making mischief between your Lady-
 “ ship and Sir John.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ Madam, your very humble servant,
 CONQUEST.”

So! so! so!—Marmalet is a trusty girl! one that will not make mischief between man and wife! that is to say, she will discover nothing against my Lady Restless! for her peace of mind he lets Madam know all this too! she may go on boldly now; my Lady Conquest is gone into the country, Marmalet is trusty, and my Lord has given her the most speedy notice. Very well! very well! proofs thicken upon proofs. Shall I go directly and challenge his Lordship?—No—no—that won’t do. Watch him closely, that will do better. If I could have a word in private with the maid—Robert, Robert, come hither. Step to my Lord Conquest’s—but with caution proceed—enquire there for Marmalet, the maid.

ROBERT.

I know her, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

He knows her! (*aside*)

ROBERT.

She visits our Tattle, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

Visits our Tattle!—it is a plain case. (*aside*)
 Enquire for that girl: but with caution: tell her to
 meet

meet me privately; unknown to any body; in the dusk of the evening; in the Bird-Cage walk, yonder.

ROBERT.

I will, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

And don't let Tattle see her. Tattle has engaged her in her mistress's interest. I see how it is. Don't let any of my servants see her: go directly, Robert. Now shall I judge what regard you have for me. But, hark ye: Come hither! a word with you. Should it be known that this girl converses with me; should my Lady have the least item of it, they will be upon their guard. Let her come wrapped up in darkness: concealed from every observer, with a mask on. Ay, let it be with a mask.

ROBERT.

A mask, Sir John? Won't that make her be remarked the more?

Sir JOHN.

No, no, let her come masked; I will make every thing sure. Robert, bring this about for me, and I am your friend for ever.

ROBERT.

I will do my endeavour, Sir.

[Exit.

Sir JOHN.

I'll now take a turn round the Park, and try if I can find the minion this picture belongs to. [Exit.

Enter

Enter BEVERLEY and BELLMONT.

BEVERLEY.

Yes, they had almost surprized us : but at sight of her father, Belinda gave the word, and away I darted down towards the canal.

BELLMONT.

Was Sir William with him ?

BEVERLEY.

Yes; they had been plotting our ruin. But we shall out-officer them, it is to be hoped.

BELLMONT.

Yes, and it is also to be feared that we shall not.

BEVERLEY.

Hey ! you alarm me : no new mine sprung !]

BELLMONT.

Nothing but the old story. Our wise fathers are determined. At the turning of yonder corner they came both full tilt upon Clarissa and me.

BEVERLEY.

Well, and how ! what passed ?

BELLMONT.

Why they were scarcely civil to your sister. Sir William fixed his surly eye upon me for some time : at last he began : you will run counter to my will, I see : you will be ever dangling after that girl : but Mr. Blandford and I have agreed upon the match : and then he peremptorily commanded

manded me to take my leave of Clarissa, and fix my heart upon your Belinda.

BEVERLEY.

And did you so?

BELLMONT.

And did you so? How can you ask such a question? Sir, says I, I must see the lady home, and off I marched, arm in arm, with her, my father bawling after me, and I bowing to him, "Sir, your humble servant, I wish you a good morning, Sir." He continued calling out: I kissed my hand to him; and so we made our escape.

BEVERLEY.

And where have you left Clarissa?

BELLMONT.

At home; at your house.

BEVERLEY.

Well! and do you both continue in the same mind; is to-morrow to be your wedding-day?

BELLMONT.

Now are you conjuring up a thousand horrid fancies to torment yourself. But don't be alarmed, my dear Beverley. I shall leave you your Belinda, and content myself with the honour of being your brother-in-law.

BEVERLEY.

Sir, the honour will be to me—But uneasy!—ha
ha!

ha!—no—no—I am not uneasy, nor shall I ever be so again.

BELLMONT.

Keep that resolution, if you can. Do you dine with us at the club?

BEVERLEY.

With all my heart: I'll attend you.

BELLMONT.

That's right; let us turn towards the Mall, and faunter there till dinner.

BEVERLEY.

No, I can't go that way yet. I must enquire how Belinda does, and what her father said to her. I have not seen her since we parted in the morning.

BELLMONT.

And now, according to custom, you will make her an apology for leaving her, when there was an absolute necessity for it, and you'll fall to an explanation of circumstances that require no explanation at all, and refine upon things, and torment yourself and her into the bargain.

BEVERLEY.

Nay, if you begin with your raillery, I am off: your servant; *a l'honneur.* *Exit.*

BELLMONT. (*alone*)

Poor Beverley!—Tho' a handsome fellow, and of agreeable talents, he has such a strange diffidence in him-

himself, and such a solicitude to please, that he is every moment of his life most ingeniously elaborating his own uneasiness.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir JOHN.

Not yet, not yet; nobody like it as yet. Ha! who is that hovering about my house?—If that should be he now!—I'll examine him nearer—Pray, Sir—what the devil shall I say?—Pray, Sir—

BELLMONT.

Sir!

Sir JOHN.

I beg pardon for troubling you, Sir; but pray what o'clock is it by your watch?

BELLMONT.

By my watch, Sir!—I'll let you know in a moment.

Sir JOHN.

Let me examine him now——(*looks at him, and then at the picture*)

BELLMONT.

Egad, I am afraid my watch is not right: it must be later. (*looking at his watch*)

Sir JOHN.

It is not like him——(*comparing the picture*)

BELL-

BELLMONT.

It does not go, I am afraid. (*puts it to his ear*)

Sir JOHN.

The eye——no!

BELLMONT.

Why, Sir, by my watch it wants a quarter of three.

Sir JOHN.

It is not he: and yet---no---no---no---I am still to seek.

Enter BEVERLEY.

BEVERLEY.

Bellmont! Another word with you.

Sir JOHN.

Here comes another; they are all swarming about my house.

BEVERLEY.

I have seen her; I have seen Belinda, my boy: she will be with Clarissa in the Park immediately after dinner, you rogue.

Sir JOHN:

I want to see his face; this may be the original.

BEVERLEY.

Her father has been rating her in his usual manner;

ner; but your marriage with my sister will settle every thing.

Sir JOHN.

I'll walk round him. (*sings*) Loll toll loll---
(*looks at him*)---ha! it has his air. (*sings*) Loll toll
loll,---and it has his eye! Loll toll loll---
(*walks to and fro*)

BEVERLEY.

Prithee, Bellmont, don't be such a dangling lover,
but consummate at once, for the sake of your friend.

Sir JOHN.

It has his nose for all the world.

BELLMONT.

Do you spirit your sister up to keep her resolution,
and to-morrow puts you out of all pain.

Sir JOHN.

Loll toll loll---it has his complexion; the same
glowing, hot, amorous complexion.
(*sings and looks uneasy*)

BEVERLEY.

Who is this gentleman?

BELLMONT.

An odd fellow he seems to be.

Sir JOHN.

Loll toll toll---it has his shoulders. Loll toll loll
—Ay, and I fancy the mole upon the cheek too. I
wish I could view him nearer: loll toll loll!

BE-

BEVERLEY.

He seems mad, I think. Where are his keepers?

Sir JOHN.

Begging your pardon, Sir---Pray (*looking at him and the picture*)---Pray, Sir, can you tell whether we shall have a Spanish war?

BEVERLEY.

Not I truly, Sir. (*to Bellmont*) Here is a politician out of his senses.

BELLMONT.

He has been talking to me too: he is too well dressed for a poet.

BEVERLEY.

Not, if he has had a good subscription.

Sir JOHN.

He has the mole sure enough. (*aside*)

BEVERLEY.

Let us step this way, to avoid this impertinent blockhead.

Sir JOHN.

Ay! he wants to sneak off. Guilt! guilt! conscious guilt! I'll make sure of him. Pray, Sir,——I beg your pardon---Is not your name Wildair?

BEVERLEY.

No, Sir, Beverley at your service.

Sir JOHN.

Have you no relation of that name?

BEVERLEY.

None.

Sir JOHN.

You are very like a gentleman of that name---a friend of mine, whose picture I have here--Will you give me leave just to---

(compares him with the picture)

BEVERLEY.

An odd adventure this, Bellmont.

BELLMONT.

Very odd, indeed.

BEVERLEY.

Do you find any likeness, Sir?

Sir JOHN.

Your head a little more that way, if you please. Ay! ay! it is he. 'Yes, a plain case; this is my man, or rather,---this is my wife's man.

BEVERLEY.

Did you ever know any thing so whimsical?

BELLMONT.

Never---ha! ha! ha!

Sir JOHN.

They are both laughing at me. Ay! and I shall be laughed at by the whole town, pointed at, hooted at, and gazed at!

BE-

BEVERLEY,

What do I see? 'Sdeath, the setting of that picture is like what I gave to Belinda. Distraction! if it is the same — (*drawing near him*)

Sir JOHN.

He makes his approach, and means, I suppose, to snatch it out of my hand. But I'll prevent him, and so into my pocket it goes. There, lie safe there.

BEVERLEY.

Confusion! he puts it up in a hurry. Will you be so good, Sir, as to favour me with a---

Sir JOHN.

Sir, I wish you a good day.

BEVERLEY.

With a sight of that picture for a moment?

Sir JOHN.

The picture, Sir——Po!---a mere daub.

BEVERLEY.

A motive of curiosity, Sir---

Sir JOHN.

It is not worth your seeing. I wish you a good day.

BEVERLEY.

I shall take it as a favour.

Sir JOHN.

A paltry thing, I have not a moment to spare; my family is waiting dinner. Sir, I wish you a good morning. (*runs into his house*)

BEVERLEY.

Death and fire! Bellmont, my picture!

BELLMONT.

Oh! no---no such thing.

BEVERLEY.

But I am sure of it. If Belinda---

BELLMONT.

What relapsing into suspicion again!

BEVERLEY.

Sir, I have reason to suspect. She flights me, disdains me, treats me with contempt.

BELLMONT.

But I tell you, that unhappy temper of yours—Prithee, man, leave teasing yourself, and let us adjourn to dinner.

BEVERLEY.

No, Sir; I shan't dine at all. I am not well.

BELLMONT.

Ridiculous! how can you be so absurd? I'll bett you twenty pounds that is not your picture.

BE-

BEVERLEY.

Done; I take it.

BELLMONT.

With all my heart; and I'll tell you more; if it be your's, I will give you leave to be as jealous of her as you please. Come, now let us adjourn.

BEVERLEY.

I attend you. In the evening we shall know the truth. If it be that I gave Belinda, she is false, and I am miserable. *[Exeunt.]*

Sir JOHN. *(peeping after them)*

There he goes; there he goes! the destroyer of my peace and happiness!—I'll follow him, and make sure that he has given me the right name; and then, my Lady Restless, the mine is sprung, and I have done with your for ever.

End of the SECOND ACT.

ACT the THIRD.

The former Scene continues.

Enter BELINDA and CLARISSA.

BELINDA.

BUT have you really fixed every thing, Clarissa?

CLARISSA.

Positively, and to-morrow morning makes me his.

BELINDA.

To-morrow morning!

CLARISSA.

Yes, to-morrow morning I release Mr. Bellmont from his fetters, and resign my person to him.

BELINDA.

Why, that is what we poor women, after all the victories of our charms, all the triumphs of our beauty, and all the murders of our eyes, must come to at last.

CLARISSA.

Well, and in that we but imitate the men. Don't we read of them conquering whole kingdoms, and then submitting at last to be governed by the vanquished.

Be-

BELINDA.

Very true, Clarissa; and I don't know but you are a heroine equal in fame to any of them; nay superior: for your scheme, I take it, is not to unpeople the world.

CLARISSA.

Prithee, don't talk so wildly. To tell you the truth, now that I have settled the affair, I begin to be alarmed at what I have done.

BELINDA.

Oh! dear, dear affectation!

CLARISSA.

Actually now, positively, I am terrified to death.

BELINDA.

To be sure:—our sex must play its tricks, and summon up all its fantastic train of doubts and fears. But courage, my dear, don't be frightened, for the same sex within that heart of yours will urge you on, and never let you be at rest, till you have procured yourself a tyrant for life.

CLARISSA.

A tyrant, Belinda! I think more generously of Mr. Bellmont, than to imagine he will usurp to himself an ill use of his power.

BELINDA.

To deal candidly I am of your opinion. But tell me now, am not I a very good girl, to resign such a man to you?

CLARISSA.

Why, indeed, I must confess the obligation.

BELINDA.

Ay! but to resign him for one whose temper does not promise that I shall live under so mild a government.

CLARISSA.

How do you mean?

BELINDA.

Why, Mr. Beverley's strange caprices, suspicions, and unaccountable whimsies, are enough to alarm one upon the brink of matrimony.

CLARISSA.

Well, I vow I can't help thinking, Belinda, that you are a little subject to vain surmises and suspicions yourself.

BELINDA.

Now, you are an insincere girl. You know I am of a temper too generous, too open——

CLARISSA.

I grant all that, but by this constant repetition of the same doubts, I should not wonder to see you most heartily jealous of him in the end.

BELINDA.

Jealous!—Oh heavens!—jealous indeed!

CLA-

CLARISSA.

Well, I say no more. As to my brother, here he comes, and let him speak for himself.

Enter BEVERLEY and BELLMONT.

BELLMONT.

Well argued, Sir: you will have it your own way, and I give up the point. Ladies your most obedient. I hope we have not transgressed our time.

BELINDA.

Not in the least; you are both very exact. True as the dial to the sun.

BEVERLEY. (*in a peevish manner.*)

Although it be not shone upon.

BELINDA.

Although it be not shone upon, Mr. Beverley! why with that dejected air, pray Sir?

BELLMONT.

There again now! you two are going to commence wrangling lovers once more. A-propos, Belinda—now Beverley, you shall see—be so good, Ma'am as to let me see this gentleman's picture.

BELINDA.

His picture! what can you want it for? You shall have it. (*searching her pocket.*)

BELL-

BELLMONT.

Now, Beverley, do you confess how wrong you have been?

BEVERLEY.

Why, I begin to see my mistake. Say not a word to her; she'll never forgive me, if you discover my infirmity. (*apart*)

BELINDA.

It is not in that pocket: it must be here. (*searches*)

BELLMONT.

You have been sad company on account of this strange suspicion.

BEVERLEY.

I own it; let it drop; say no more. (*aside*)

BELINDA.

Well! I protest and vow—where can it be? Come, gentlemen, this is some trick of yours: you have it among ye. Mr. Bellmont, Mr. Beverley, pray return it to me.

BEVERLEY.

No, Ma'am, it is no trick of ours. (*angrily*)

BELINDA.

As I live and breathe I have not got it.

BEVER-

BEVERLEY.

What think you now, Bellmont?

BELLMONT.

She'll find it presently, man; don't shew your humours: be upon your guard; you'll undo yourself else. Clarissa, shall you and I faunter down this walk?

CLARISSA.

My brother seems out of humour: what is the matter now?

BELLMONT.

I'll tell you presently: let us step this way.
[Exit with Clarissa.]

BELINDA.

Well, I declare, I don't know what is come of this odious picture.

BEVERLEY.

This odious picture! how she expresses it!

BELINDA.

You may look grave, Sir, but I have it not.

BEVERLEY.

I know you have not, Ma'am; and though you may imagine——

BELINDA.

Imagine! what do you mean?—Imagine what?

BEVER-

BEVERLEY.

Don't imagine that I am to be led blindfold as you please.

BELINDA.

Heavens ! with what gravity that was said !

BEVERLEY.

I am not to be deceived ; I can see all round me.

BELINDA.

You can ?

BEVERLEY.

I can, Madam.

BELINDA.

Well, and how do you like your prospect ?

BEVERLEY.

Oh ! you may think to pass it off in raillery : but that picture I have this day seen in the hands of another ; in the hands of the very gentleman to whom you gave it.

BELINDA.

To whom I gave it ?—have a care, Sir ; this is another symptom of your jealous temper.

BEVERLEY.

But I tell you, Madam, I saw it in his hand.

BE-

BELINDA.

Who is the gentleman?—What's his name?

BEVERLEY.

His name, Madam!—'fdeath! I forgot that circumstance. Though I don't know his name, Madam, I know his person, and that is sufficient.

BELINDA.

Go on, Sir: you are making yourself very ridiculous in this matter.—Ha! ha!—

BEVERLEY.

You may laugh, Madam, but it is no laughing matter, that let me assure you.

BELINDA.

Oh! brave—follow your own notions. I gave it away: I have scorned your present. Ha! ha!—Poor Mr. Beverley!

BEVERLEY.

I don't doubt you, Ma'am: I believe you did give it away.

BELINDA.

Mighty well, Sir, think so if you please. I shall leave you to your own imagination: it will find wherewithal to entertain you. Ha! ha! the self-tormenting Beverley! yonder I see Clarissa and Mr. Bellmont. I will join them this instant. Your servant, Sir. Amuse yourself with your own fancies—ha! ha!

[Exit.

BERVER-

(BEVERLEY. *alone*)

Plague and distraction!—I can't tell what to make of this. She carries it off with an air of confidence. And yet if that be my picture, which I saw this morning, then it is plain I am only laught at by her. The dupe of her caprice!—I cannot bear it.

Enter BELINDA, CLARISSA, *and* BELLMOUR.

BELINDA.

Observe him now. Let us walk by him without taking any notice. Let us talk of any thing rather than be silent. What a charming evening!

CLARISSA.

And how gay the Park looks!—mind the gentleman!

BELINDA.

Take no notice; I beg you wont. Suppose we were to shew ourselves in the Mall, Clarissa, and walk our charms there, as the French express it?

BELLMOUR.

Ha! ha!—Beverley!—what fixed in contemplation!

BEVERLEY.

Sir, I beg—I chuse to be alone, Sir.

BELLMOUR, BELINDA, *and* CLARISSA.

Ha! ha! ha!

BE-

BEVERLEY.

Pshaw! impertinent. (*aside*)

BELINDA.

Oh! for heaven's sake, let us indulge the gentleman. Let us leave him to himself, and his ill-humours. This way, this way. You shall go home and have your tea with me. Mr. Beverley, (*she kisses her hand to him at some distance, and laughs at him*) your servant, Sir: I wish you a good evening. A l'honneur. [*Exeunt.*]

BEVERLEY. (*alone*)

Distraction! you may retire. Your servant, Madam. Racks and torment! this is too much. If she has parted with the picture; if she has given it away—but she may only have lent it, or she may have lost it. But even that, even that is an injury to me. Why should she not be more careful of it? I will know the bottom of it. That's the house the gentleman went into. I'll wait on him directly: but they are watching me. I'll walk another way, to elude their observation. Ay! ay! you may laugh Ma'am, but I shall find out all your artifices. [*Exit.*]

Scene an Apartment at Sir JOHN's.

Enter Lady RESTLESS, meeting ROBERT.

Lady RESTLESS.

Where are you going, Sir?

Ro-

ROBERT.

To my master's room, Madam, to leave these cloaths there.

Lady RESTLESS.

Stay, Sir; stay a moment. (*searches the pockets*)
Where are his letters?

ROBERT.

Letters, my Lady! I know of no letters: I never touch his pockets.

Lady RESTLESS.

I guessed you would say so. You are Sir John's agent; the conductor of his schemes.

ROBERT.

I, Madam!

Lady RESTLESS.

You, Sir, you are his secretary for love-affairs.

ROBERT.

I collect his rents, my Lady, and——

Lady RESTLESS.

Oh! Sir, I am not to be deceived. I know you are my enemy.

ROBERT.

Enemy, my Lady! I am sure, as far as a poor servant dare, I am a friend to both.

Lady

Lady RESTLESS.

Then tell me honestly, have not you conveyed his letters out of my way?

ROBERT.

Indeed, Madam, not I.

Lady RESTLESS.

Then he has done it himself. Artful man! I never can find a line after him. Where did you go for him this morning?

ROBERT.

This morning!

Lady RESTLESS.

Ay! this morning. I know he sent you somewhere? Where was it?

ROBERT.

Upon my word, my Lady——

Lady RESTLESS.

Very well, Sir: I see how it is. You are all bent against me. I shall never be at rest till every servant in this house is of my own choosing. Is Tattle come home yet?

ROBERT.

No, Madam.

Lady RESTLESS.

Where can she be gadding? Hark!—I hear a
VOL. III. S rap

rap at the door. This is Sir John, I suppose. Stay, let me listen. I don't know that voice. Who can it be? Some of his libertine company, I suppose.

ROBERT.

My Lady, if you will believe me——

Lady RESTLESS.

Hold your tongue, man: let me hear. You want to hinder me, do you?

ROBERT.

Indeed, Madam——

Lady RESTLESS.

Hold your tongue, I say! won't you hold your tongue? Go about your business, Sir, go about your business. What does he say? (*listening*) I can't hear a word. Who is below there?

Enter TATTLE, with a Capuchin on.

Lady RESTLESS.

So, Mrs. Tattle, who is that at the door?

TATTLE.

A gentleman, Madam, speaking to William.

Lady RESTLESS.

And where have you been, mistress? How dare you go out without my leave?

TATTLE.

Dear my Lady, don't be angry with me. I was so
terri-

terrified about what happened in the morning; and your Ladyship was in such a perilous taking about it, that I went to desire Mrs. Marmalet would justify herself and me.

Lady RESTLESS.

Oh! very well, Mrs. Busy-Body. You have been there, have you? You have been to frame a story among yourselves, have you, and to hinder me from discovering? But I'll go to my Lady Conquest myself. I have had no answer to my letter, and 'tis you have occasioned it. Thanks to your meddling!

TATTLE.

Dear my Lady, if you will but give me leave: I have been doing you the greatest piece of service. I believe, in my conscience, there is something in what you suspect about Sir John.

Lady RESTLESS.

Do you? why? how?

TATTLE.

I have seen Mrs. Marmalet, and I have made such a discovery!

Lady RESTLESS.

Have you, Tattle? Well! What? speak, tell me; what is it?

TATTLE.

Robert has been there, Madam, with a message from Sir John, who wants to see her in the evening; and he has desired——

Lady RESTLESS.

Blessings on you, Tattle: well; go on; tell me all.

Enter a SERVANT.

Lady RESTLESS.

What do you want, Sir? Who called you? Go about your business.

SERVANT.

Madam, there is a gentleman wants to speak with Sir John about a picture.

Lady RESTLESS.

I had forgot me. It was he rapped at the door, I suppose.

SERVANT.

Yes, Madam!

Lady RESTLESS.

About a picture!---This may lead to some further discovery. Desire the gentleman to step up stairs. (*Exit Servant*)---and so, Tattle, Robert has been there?

TATTLE.

Yes, Ma'am.

Lady RESTLESS.

And Sir John wants to speak with Marmalet in the evening, and has desired---Oh! the base man!---what

what has he desired? Now he is discovered. What has he desired?

TATTLE.

He has desired, Ma'am,—the poor girl does not know what to make of it—She is very sober and discreet, I assure you, Ma'am—he has desired, Ma'am, in the dusk of the evening, that Mrs. Marmalet will come and——

Lady RESTLESS.

How unlucky this is? The gentleman is coming. I have a mind not to see him: and yet I will too. Tattle, do you step to my room; as soon as he goes, I will come to you, and hear all in private. (*Exit Tattle*) In the dusk of the evening he desires to see her: abandoned wretch!

Enter BEVERLEY.

BEVERLEY.

Madam——(*bows*)

Lady RESTLESS.

Pray walk in, Sir. (*curtsies*)

BEVERLEY.

I wanted a word with Sir John Restless, Madam.

Lady RESTLESS.

About a picture?

BEVERLEY.

Yes, Madam, a picture I had given to a lady; and however insignificant in itself, it is to me of the

highest consequence, as it may conduce to the explanation of an affair, in which the happiness of my life is concerned.

Lady RESTLESS.

The lady is young?

BEVERLEY.

She is.

Lady RESTLESS.

And handsome?

BEVERLEY.

In the highest degree; my heart is devoted to her; and I have reason to suspect, that a present from me is not of so much value as I could wish. To be plain, Ma'am, I imagine she has given the picture away.

Lady RESTLESS.

As I guessed: my suspicions are just.

BEVERLEY.

Your suspicions, Madam! Did you suspect it was given to Sir John Restless?

Lady RESTLESS.

What I know of the matter shall be no secret to you. Pray, Sir, have you spoke to the lady on this subject?

BEVERLEY.

I have, but she knows nothing of the matter; she has

has lost it, she has mislaid it, she can give no account of it.

Lady RESTLESS.

She has given it to Sir John, Sir, to shew him how little she regards it.

BEVERLEY.

Given it to him ?

Lady RESTLESS.

Given it to him, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

Then I have no further doubt.

Lady RESTLESS.

Of what ?

BEVERLEY.

Madam, I would not hurt your peace of mind ; I would not give you an impression of Sir John, that may affect his character.

Lady RESTLESS.

Oh ! Sir, stand upon no ceremony with him ; an injurious, false, licentious man !

BEVERLEY.

Is that his character ?

Lady RESTLESS.

Notoriously : he has made me miserable ; false to his marriage vows, and warm in the pursuit of his
S 4 plea-

pleasures abroad!—I have not deserved it of him.
Oh! Sir John! Sir John! (*cries*)

BEVERLEY.

She weeps; the case is plain, and I am undone.

Lady RESTLESS.

Pray, Sir, what is the lady's name?

BEVERLEY.

Belinda Blandford.

Lady RESTLESS.

Belinda Blandford! So far I have discovered,
(*aside*)

BEVERLEY.

Pray, Madam, have you ever seen her?

Lady RESTLESS.

Seen her, Sir! yes, I have seen too much of her,

BEVERLEY.

You alarm me, Madam. You have seen nothing improper, I hope.

Lady RESTLESS.

I don't know what you call improper. But, pray, what ought one to think of a young lady thrown familiarly into a gentleman's arms?

BEVERLEY.

In his arms, Madam! Sir John's arms!

Lady

Lady RESTLESS.

In Sir John's ! in open day ; in the Park ; under my very window ; most familiarly, wantonly reclining in his very arms.

BEVERLEY.

Oh ! Heavens !

Lady RESTLESS.

He clasping her with equal freedom round the waist !

BEVERLEY.

False, false Belinda !

Lady RESTLESS.

Both interchanging fond, mutual glances.

BEVERLEY.

Oh ! Madam, the whole is come to light, and I thank you for the discovery, though I am ruined by it. But give me leave : is all this certain ?

Lady RESTLESS.

There can be no doubt, Sir ; these eyes beheld their amorous meeting.

BEVERLEY.

Saw it yourself ?

Lady RESTLESS.

Yes, all, all, Sir. Sir John I know is capable of any thing, and you know what to think of Belinda, as you call her.

BE-

BEVERLEY.

I now know what to think : I have long had reason to suspect.

Lady RESTLESS.

You have, Sir ? Then the whole affair is plain enough.

BEVERLEY.

It is so. I meant an honourable connection with her;——but——

Lady RESTLESS.

But you see, Sir !

BEVERLEY.

Yes, I see, Madam——you are sure Sir John has the picture ?

Lady RESTLESS.

Sure, Sir !——it is your own picture. I had it in my hands but a moment, and he flew with ardor, with impetuosity, like a fury flew to it, and recovered it from me. What could be the meaning of all that violence ?

BEVERLEY.

The meaning is too plain.

Lady RESTLESS.

And then, Sir, when charged and pressed home with his guilt, most hypocritically he pretended to believe it the portrait of some favourite of mine. But you know, Sir, how false that insinuation is.

BE-

BEVERLEY.

Oh! Madam, I can justify you---Ha! ha! that is but a poor evasion, and confirms me the more in my opinion. I return you many thanks, Madam, and humbly take my leave.

Lady RESTLESS.

Sir, I am glad you thought it prudent to speak to me about this affair. If any other circumstances come to your knowledge, I shall take it as a favour if you will acquaint me with them; for, indeed, Sir, I am very unhappy.

BEVERLEY.

I am in gratitude bound to you, and my best services you shall ever command. Madam, your most obedient.—Oh! Belinda! Belinda! [Exit.

Lady RESTLESS:

Now, Sir John, how will you be able to confront these stubborn facts? You are now seen through all your disguises; detected in your true colours. Tattle within here has fresh proofs against you, and your man Robert, and the whole house. I must hear Tattle's story this very moment. [Exit.

SCENE, *the* PARK.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir JOHN.

Yes, yes, he told me his name honestly enough. Beverley is his name; and my Lady Restless, now your gallant, your paramour is known. What do I see?

fee? By all my wrongs, the very man again!
coming out of my house before my face!

BEVERLEY *and* ROBERT *come out of the House.*

BEVERLEY.

There, friend, there is something for your trouble.

ROBERT.

I thank your Honour.

Sir JOHN.

He bribes my servant too; and the fellow takes it!
Both in their trade; both in their trade!

BEVERLEY:

Could I have suspected her of such treachery? *As*
I could wish: I take that to be Sir John Restless.

Sir JOHN.

This is he to whom I have so many obligations.
(aside)

BEVERLEY.

Well encountered: your servant, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

My servant, Sir!——I rather take it you are my
lady's servant.

BEVERLEY.

You, if I don't mistake, Sir John, are a pretty ge-
neral servant of the ladies. Pray, Sir, have not you
a picture of mine in your pocket?

Sir

Sir JOHN.

That, I suppose, you have heard from my good lady within there.

BEVERLEY.

Yes, Sir, and I have heard a great deal more from my Lady.

Sir JOHN.

I don't in the least doubt it.

BEVERLEY.

Sir, I do not mean to work myself up into any choler about such a trifling bauble. Since the lady has thought proper to give it to you——

Sir JOHN.

Do her justice, pray; she did not give it; so far she was true to you. I took it from her, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

Took it from her! That shews he is upon easy terms. (*aside*) It is of no consequence to me; I despise it, and you are welcome to make what use you will of it. This I will only say, that you have made me miserable.

Sir JOHN.

What, I have interrupted your happiness?

BEVERLEY.

You have.

Sir

Sir JOHN.

And no doubt you think it cruel of me so to do.

BEVERLEY.

Call it by what name you will: you have ruined me with the woman I doated on to distraction.

Sir JOHN.

A candid declaration! And so, Sir, you doated on her, and never reflected that you were doing me the least injury?

BEVERLEY.

Injury!—I promise you, Sir, I will never injure you again, and so you may set your mind at peace. I here declare I never will hold farther intercourse with her.

Sir JOHN.

Oh! that is too late for me. I have now done with her myself. You are very welcome to the lady, Sir! you may take her home with you as soon as you please. I forswear her, and so I shall tell my lady this moment. (*going*)

BEVERLEY.

That will make her Ladyship happy, no doubt.

Sir JOHN.

Yes, I dare say you know it will.

BEVERLEY.

She told me as much, Sir.

Sir

Sir JOHN.

She did !---why then you may depend I shall keep my word, and my Lady may depend upon it too. And that, I suppose, will make you both happy, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

My happiness is past recalling : I disdain all further connection with the lady.

Sir JOHN.

Ay, you are tired of her ?

BEVERLEY.

I loath her, detest her, hate her as much as I ever loved her.

Sir JOHN.

And so do I too, I assure you. And so I shall tell my Lady this very instant. Your servant, Sir. If I can find proof sufficient, you shall hear of me, I promise you. [Exit.

BEVERLEY.

I see how it is : she has been connected with him, till she has pall'd his very appetite. 'Sdeath, I'll seek her this moment, upbraid her with her falshood, and then---by heavens ! I shall do it with regret. I feel a tug at my heart-string : but were I to be torn piece-meal, this shall be our last interview.

Enter BELINDA, CLARISSA, and BELLMONT.

BELINDA.

Alas a-day ! poor soul ! see where he takes his melancholy

lancholy walk. Did not I tell you, Clarissa, that the stricken deer could not quit this place?

CLARISSA.

And did not I tell you, Belinda, that you could not keep away from the pursuit?

BELLMONT.

Pray, Ma'am, do you want to be in at the death, or do you mean to bring the poor thing to life again?

BELINDA.

I!—what do you mean?—You bring me this way.

CLARISSA.

Well! if that is the case, we had as good go home, for I want my tea.

BELINDA.

Po! not yet: it is not six o'clock.

BELLMONT *and* CLARISSA.

Ha! ha!

BELINDA.

What do ye laugh at?

CLARISSA.

At you, my dear: why, 'tis past seven. Oh! Belinda, you are the stricken deer, I find.

BELINDA.

Who I? Not I truly; I—

CLA—

CLARISSA.

My dear Belinda, I know you. Come, we will do the good natured thing by you, and leave you to yourselves. Success attend you. Come, Mr. Bellmont. [Exeunt

BELINDA.

Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train,
Fair Sacharissa lov'd, but lov'd in vain.

BEVERLEY.

Po! po! (*looking peevishly at her.*)

BELINDA.

Won't you know me, Sir?

BEVERLEY.

Yes, Madam, I know you: it is but too true, that I know you.

BELINDA.

Still gloomy and discontented! Come, come, under pain of my displeasure, brighten up this moment.

BEVERLEY.

Silly, idle, ridiculous!

BELINDA.

Take care of what you are about. When I proclaim a pardon, you had better embrace it, than reduce yourself to the necessity of sighing, vowing, protesting, writing to me, following me up and down, kneeling at my feet, imploring forgiveness—

BEVERLEY.

Madam, you will never again see me humbled to that low degree.

BELINDA.

Upon my word! ha! ha! ha!

BEVERLEY.

Oh! you may laugh, Ma'am: you have too long imposed upon my fond, easy credulity. But the witchery of your charms is over.

BELINDA.

Very well, Sir! and you are your own man again.

BEVERLEY.

I am, Madam, and you may be your own woman again, or any body's woman, or every body's.

BELINDA.

You grow rude, Sir!

BEVERLEY.

It is time to wave all ceremony, and to tell you plainly, that your falshood——

BELINDA.

My falshood, Sir!

BEVERLEY.

Your falshood!—I know the whole story. I loved you once, Belinda, tenderly loved you, and by Heaven I swear, it is with sorrow that I can no longer
adore

adore you. It is with anguish that I now bid you an everlasting farewell. (*going*)

BELINDA.

Explain, Sir : what action of my life ?

BEVERLEY.

Your prudence forsook you at last. It was too glaring ; too manifest in open day !

BELINDA.

Too manifest in open day !—Mr. Beverley I shall hate you.

BEVERLEY.

All circumstances inform against you : my picture given away !

BELINDA:

Insolent ! provoking ! wrong-headed man ! I'll confirm him in his error, to torment him as he deserves. (*aside*) Well, Sir, what if I chose to give it away ! I am mistress of my own actions, am I not ?

BEVERLEY.

I know that, Ma'am : I know that ; and I am not uneasy, Ma'am.

BELINDA.

So it seems—ha ! ha !—why do you sigh, poor man ?

BEVERLEY.

Sigh, Madam ! I disdain it.

BELINDA.

I am glad of it; now that is so manly! but pray watch yourself well, hold a guard upon all your passions, otherwise they will make a fool of you again.

BEVERLEY.

And do you take care you don't expose yourself again. Lolling familiarly in a gentleman's arms;

BELINDA.

How!

BEVERLEY.

Here, in the Park! in open day!

BELINDA.

What can this mean?

BEVERLEY.

He inviting you to his house!

BELINDA.

Oh! I understand him now; when I fainted, all this was. I'll encourage his notion, to be revenged of his waspish temper. (*aside*) Well, Sir, and what then?

BEVERLEY.

What then?

BELINDA.

Ha! ha! poor Mr. Beverley!—why should you be in a piteous taking, because I, in the gaiety of my heart,

heart, give away a picture I set no value on, or walk with a gentleman I do set a value on, or lean on his arm, or make the man happy by letting him draw on my glove.

BEVERLEY.

Or draw off your glove, Madam.

BELINDA.

Ay! or draw it off!

BEVERLEY.

Yes, or—or—or take any other liberties.

BELINDA.

Very true.

BEVERLEY.

You may make light of it, Madam, but——

BELINDA.

Why yes, a generous temper always makes light of the favours it confers.

BEVERLEY.

And some generous tempers will make light of any thing to gratify their inclinations. Madam, I have done: I abjure you; eternally abjure you. (*going*)

BELINDA.

Bon voyage!

BEVERLEY.

Don't imagine that you will see me again.

BELINDA.

Adieu!—Well, what, coming again? Why do you linger so? (*repeats affectedly*)

Thus o'er the dying lamp, the unsteady flame
Hangs quivering to a point!

BEVERLEY.

With what an air she carries it? I have but this one thing more to tell you: by Heaven I loved you, to excess I loved you: such is my weakness, I shall never quite forget you. I shall be glad, if hereafter I hear of your happiness, and if I can, no dishonour shall befall you.

BELINDA.

Ho! ho!—well! my obliging, generous Don Quixote, go and fight windmills, and castles in the air, and a thousand phantoms of your own creation, for your Dulcinea's sake! ho! ho! ho!

BEVERLEY.

Confusion! Take notice, Madam, that this is the last time of my troubling you.

BELINDA.

I shall expect you to-morrow morning.

BEVERLEY.

No, never; by Heaven, never!

BE-

BELINDA.

Exactly at ten ; your usual hour.

BEVERLEY.

May I perish at your feet, if ever again——

BELINDA.

Oh ! brave ! but remember ten ; kneeling, beseeching, imploring, your hand upon your heart, “ Belinda, won’t you forgive me ? ”

BEVERLEY.

Damnation !——I have done : I here bid you an eternal adieu !——farewel for ever ! [*Exit.*

BELINDA.

I shall wait breakfast for you. Ha ! ha ! poor Beverley ! he cannot command his temper. But, in spite of all his faults, I love him still. What the poet says of great wits, may be applied to all jealous lovers ;

——To madness sure they’re near allied ;
And thin partitions do their bounds divide ;

End of the THIRD ACT.

A C T the F O U R T H.

*Scene an Apartment in BEVERLEY'S House.**Enter BEVERLEY.*

SO! Belinda, I have escaped your snares: I have recovered my freedom. And yet, if she had not proved false, what a treasure of love and happiness had I in store! her beauty—po! no more of her beauty: it is external, superficial, the mere result of features and complexion. A deceitful Syren, to draw the unwary into a dream of happiness, and then wake him into wonder at the storms and tempests that gather round him. I have done with her; I'll think no more of her. Oh! Belinda! Belinda!

Enter BRUSH.

BRUSH.

Please your Honour——

BEVERLEY.

She that in every part of life seemed so amiable!

BRUSH.

Sir!

BEVERLEY.

Under so fair a mask to wear such loose designs!

BRUSH.

What is he musing upon?—Sir——

BE-

BEVERLEY.

I have done with her for ever; ay, for ever.
(*humms a tune*) I swear for ever (*sings*)—are you
there, Brush?

BRUSH.

Yes, your Honour: here is a letter.

BEVERLEY.

So unforeseen, so unexpected a discovery! Well!
well! well! what did you say, Brush?

BRUSH.

A letter for your Honour, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

Give it to me another time. (*walks about*) I'll
not make myself uneasy about her.

BRUSH.

I fancy your Honour will be glad to have it now.

BEVERLEY.

What did you say?

BRUSH.

It is a letter from Madam Belinda, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

Belinda! I won't read it: take it away.

BRUSH.

Hey! which way is the wind now? Some quarrel
I sup-

I suppose: but the falling out of lovers—must I take it away, Sir?

BEVERLEY.

I have done with her for ever.

BRUSH.

Have done with Madam Belinda, Sir!

BEVERLEY.

Oh! Brush she is—but I will not proclaim her shame. No, let me still be tender of her. I will see her no more, Brush, that is all; hear from her no more: she shall not wind herself about my heart again. I'll go out of town directly: order my chaise to the door.

BRUSH.

Had not you better defer it till morrow morning, Sir? perhaps then——

BEVERLEY.

No, no; directly; do as I bid you.

BRUSH.

Consider, Sir, if your mind should change, the trouble of coming back post-haste——

BEVERLEY.

No, never; I say, never: what to her, who could smile on me, on him, on a thousand? No; she shall know that I am a man, and no longer the dupe of her artifice.

BRUSH.

BRUSH.

But, Sir, you know that one solitary tear, which, after miserably chafing for it half an hour together, she will painfully distil from the corner of her eye, will extinguish all this rage, and then——

BEVERLEY.

Po ! po ! you know nothing of the matter. Go, and order the chaise directly.

BRUSH.

Yes, Sir. I suppose a couple of shirts will be sufficient, Sir ?—you will hardly stay them out.

BEVERLEY.

Pack up all, Sir. I shall stay in the country a whole month, if it be necessary.

BRUSH.

An entire month, Sir !

BEVERLEY.

I am resolved, fixed, determined ; and so, do as I have ordered you. (*Exit Brush*)——So shall I disentangle myself from her entirely, so shall I forget the fondness my foolish heart had conceived for her. I hate her, loath her, pity her, am sorry for her, and love her still. I must expel this weakness : I will think no more of her : and yet---Brush ! Brush !---I may as well see her letter too : only to try what her cunning can suggest.

Enter

Enter BRUSH.

BEVERLEY.

You may as well leave the letter, Brush.

BRUSH.

Yes, Sir; I thought as much.

[*Exit.*]

BEVERLEY. (*alone*)

Now what varnish will she put upon the matter!
—(*reads*) “The false gaiety of my heart, through
“which my dear Beverley might have read my real
“anguish at our last meeting, has now subsided. If
“you will come to me, I will not laugh at your in-
“quietude of temper, but will clear all your
“doubts, and shew you how much I am, my dearest
“Beverley, unalterably your’s,

“BELINDA BLANDFORD.”

Pshaw! po! satisfy my doubts! I have no
doubts; I am convinced. These arts prevail no
more. Ha! ha! (*laughs peevishly*)—“My dear
“Beverley” (*reads, and tears the letter by degrees*)—
“real anguish”—ha! ha! (*tears another piece*)—
“inquietude of temper”—(*another piece*)—“clear
“all your doubts”—Po! po! po!—ha! ha!—
damnation!—I’ll think no more of her—(*tears an-
other bit*)—ha! ha!—“dearest Beverley”—ha! ha!
—artfull woman!—“unalterably your’s”—false!
false! false!—(*tears another piece*)—I’ll not make
myself uneasy about her. Perfidy! treachery! and
ingratitude! (*fixes his eye, looks uneasy, and tears the
letter in a violent passion*)

Enter CLARISSA and BELLMONT.

CLARISSA.

So, brother!

BELL-

BELLMONT.

Beverley!

BEVERLEY.

Sister, your servant: Mr. Bellmont, your's.

CLARISSA.

You seem melancholy, brother.

BEVERLEY.

No, not I. I am in very good spirits.

CLARISSA.

Ha! ha! my dear brother, that is seen through: you are now upon the rack.

BEVERLEY.

What about a woman, a false, ungrateful woman!

BELLMONT.

Whom you still admire.

CLARISSA.

To whom you'll be upon your knees in five minutes.

BEVERLEY.

You are mistaken: I am going out of town.

BELLMONT.

But you will take your leave.

BE-

BEVERLEY.

I have done that, once for all.

CLARISSA.

Has not she writ to you?

BEVERLEY.

She has; and there,---there you see the effect of her letter. You will see that I shall maintain a proper firmness on the occasion.

BELLMONT.

My dear Beverley, have done with this mockery: you but deceive yourself.

BEVERLEY.

You want to deceive me, Sir: but it is in vain, What, plead for treachery, for falsehood, for deceit?

CLARISSA.

No, Sir, but for my friend, my lovely friend, for Belinda, for truth, for innocence.

BEVERLEY.

You don't know all the circumstances.

CLARISSA.

But we do know all the circumstances, and, my dear brother, you have behaved very ill.

BEVERLEY.

Heaven knows, I have not, and yet, Heaven knows, I should be glad to be convinced I have.

CLA-

CLARISSA.

I will be your friend, and give you a hint. We women are soft and compassionate in our nature; go to her without delay, fall at her feet, beg her pardon, drop a tear or two, and all will be well again.

BEVERLEY.

Do you come to make sport of me? May contempt and beggary attend me; may all the calamities of life befall me; may shame, confusion, and disquiet of heart for ever sting me, if I hold further intercourse with her; if I do not put her from my thoughts for ever. Did you leave her at home?

CLARISSA.

We did.

BEVERLEY.

Well, let her stay there: it is of no consequence to me. How did she bear what passed between us?

CLARISSA.

Like a sweet girl as she is: she behaved like an angel: I shall love her better than ever for her good humour.

BEVERLEY.

Oh! I don't doubt her good humour. She has smiles at command. Let her smile or not smile, 'tis all alike to me: did she say any thing?

CLARISSA.

She told us the whole story, and told it in tears too.

BE-

BEVERLEY.

Ay! them she can command too! But I have no curiosity about her: Was she in tears?

CLARISSA.

She was, and wept bitterly. How could you, brother, behave so rashly to so amiable a girl? Have you a pleasure in being the cause of her uneasiness?

BEVERLEY.

I the cause?—you wrong me, by Heaven you wrong me: my Lady Restless was the cause. She told me such things; she planted daggers in my very heart.

CLARISSA.

You planted daggers in Belinda's heart. And it was barbarous. What, because a lady has not strength enough to bear up against a father, who is resolved to give her away to another, and because she faints out of excessive tenderness for you, and in that distress meets accidental relief from Sir John Restless at his own door?

BEVERLEY.

How!

CLARISSA.

And because my Lady Restless sees this out of her window, and has a perverse talent of misinterpreting appearances into realities, to her own disadvantage; you must therefore fill your head with ungenerous suspicions? Oh! for shame, brother, how could you?

BE-

BEVERLEY.

But, is all this true?—is it really the case?

BELLMONT.

How can you doubt it? You know Belinda too well: it is the case, man.

BEVERLEY.

I should be glad to find it so.

CLARISSA.

Well! I tell you it is so. How could you think otherwise? you know she has the best heart in the world, and is so nice of honour, that she scorns all falshood and dissimulation.

BELLMONT.

Ha! ha! my dear Beverley, you have done the absurdest thing.

BEVERLEY.

Why, if what you say can be made to appear——but then she'll never forgive my past behaviour.

CLARISSA.

Po! you talk as if you was wholly unletter'd in the tempers of women. My dear brother, you know, you men can do what you please with us, when you have once gained an interest in our hearts. Go to her, I say, go to her, and make your peace.

BEVERLEY.

May I depend upon what you say?

CLARISSA.

You may.

BEVERLEY.

Then I'll fly to her this instant, humble myself to her, and promise by all my future life to atone for this brutal injury.

Enter BRUSH.

BRUSH.

The chaise is at the door, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

You may put up again; I shan't go out of town.

BRUSH.

No, Sir!

BEVERLEY.

No—ha! ha!——you may put up, and let me have the chariot directly.

BRUSH.

Yes, Sir; I knew it would come to this. [*Exit.*

BEVERLEY.

But do you think she will forgive me?

CLARISSA.

She will; love will plead your cause.

BE-

BEVERLEY.

My dear sister, I am for ever obliged to you; and Bellmont, I thank you too. How could I wrong her so? I shall behold her once again. I cannot help laughing at my own rashness. Is the chariot ready?—I won't stay for it; I am on the wing, my dear Belinda, to implore forgiveness. And so she fainted away in the Park, and my Lady Restless saw Sir John afford her relief?—Ha! ha! ha!—whimsical enough. Ha! ha! ha! what a strange construction her crazy temper put upon it? Ha! ha! how could the woman be so foolish? My dear Belinda, I will fly to you this moment—ha! ha! (*going, returns*) Sir John shall give me back the picture, and, on my knees, I will once more present it to her.

CLARISSA.

So! so! you are come to yourself, I find.

BELLMONT.

I knew it would be so.

BEVERLEY.

She shall have the picture. I'll find Sir John directly: and then—ha! ha! how could I be such a madman! ha! ha!—sister, your servant. Bellmont, yours. Ha! ha! what a piece of work has that foolish Lady Restless made for us all?

[*Exit, singing.*

CLARISSA.

Let us follow him: I must be present at their reconciliation.

[*Exit with Bellmont.*

Scene an Apartment at BELINDA'S.

Enter BELINDA.

BELINDA.

This rash, unaccountable man ! how could he entertain such a suspicion ! ungrateful Beverley ! he almost deserves I should never see him again. Tippet ! I shan't be easy till I hear from him. Tippet !

Enter TIPPET.

BELINDA.

Is the servant returned from Mr. Beverley's ?

TIPPET.

Not yet, Madam.

BELINDA.

I wonder what keeps him. I am upon thorns till I see the dear, ungenerous man, and explain every thing to him. Oh ! Mr. Beverley ! how could you treat me so ? But I was partly to blame ; my Lady Restless inflamed his mind, and I should not have trifled with his passion. Is the other servant returned from Sir John Restless ?

TIPPET.

He is, Madam.

BE-

BELINDA.

And what answer?

TIPPET.

Sir John will wait upon you himself, Madam, directly.

BELINDA.

Very well! I must get him to set every thing in its true light, and justify my conduct to Mr. Beverley. And yet the uncertainty of Beverley's temper alarms me strangely. His eternal suspicions! but there is nothing in that: my future conduct, my regard for him will cure that disease, and then——

TIPPET.

I dare be sworn it will, Ma'am.

BELINDA.

Yes, I think it will: when he knows me better, he will learn to think generously of me. On my part, I think I can be sure he will meet with nothing but open, unsuspecting love.

Enter a SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Sir John Restless, Madam.

BELINDA.

Shew him in. Tippet, do you leave the room.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir JOHN.

In compliance with your commands, Madam——

BELINDA.

I am obliged to you, Sir, for the trouble you have been pleased to give yourself. A particular circumstance has happened in your family, to my utter disquiet.

Sir JOHN.

Madam, there have happened things in my family, to my utter disquiet too.

BELINDA:

I am sorry for that, Sir. I have been made quite unhappy, and must beg, as it is in your power, that you will be kind enough to remove the cause of my uneasiness.

Sir JOHN.

Whatever I can do, you may command.

BELINDA.

Sir, I thank you, and must tell you, that your Lady has done me the most irreparable injury.

Sir JOHN.

She has done the same to me. My injuries are irreparable too. But how has she injured you, Madam?

Be-

BELINDA.

She has ruined me, Sir, with the man I love to distraction.

Sir JOHN.

Now, here something else will come to light (*aside*)—How, how has she done that, Madam?

BELINDA.

She has entirely drawn off his affections from me.

Sir JOHN.

And fixed them upon herself, I suppose.

BELINDA.

I don't say that, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

But I dare say it; and I believe it.

BELINDA.

Pardon me, Sir, I don't charge the lady with any thing of that kind. But she has unaccountably taken it into her head to be jealous of me.

Sir JOHN.

Jealous of you!

BELINDA.

Her Ladyship saw the little offices of civility I received from you this morning: she misunderstood every thing, it seems, and has told the gentleman

with whom I was engaged in a treaty of marriage, that improper freedoms have passed between us.

Sir JOHN.

Artifice! artifice! her usual policy, Madam, to cover her own libertine ways.

BELINDA.

I don't mean to say any thing harsh of the Lady. But you know what foundation there is for this, and I hope will do me justice.

Sir JOHN.

Oh! Madam, to the world, to the wide world I'll justify you. I will wait upon the gentleman. Who is he, Madam? What's his name?

BELINDA.

Beverley, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

Beverley!

BELINDA.

Yes, Sir; you seem surpris'd. Do you know him, Sir?

Sir JOHN.

Yes, yes, I know him; and he shall know me: my resentment he shall feel; he shall be answerable to me.

BELINDA.

Answerable to you!

Sir

Sir JOHN.

To me, Madam. I told you at first this was her scheme to shelter herself; and he, I suppose, is combined with her to give this turn to the affair, and to charge me with infidelity. But you, Ma'am, can witness for me.

BELINDA.

I can, Sir: but can Mr. Beverley be capable of a dishonourable action?

Sir JOHN.

That point is clear enough. He has injured me in the highest degree, destroyed my happiness.

BELINDA.

How, Sir! are you sure of this?

Sir JOHN.

He has given her his picture; I caught her with her eyes rivetted to it; I heard her admiration, her praises of it; her wishes that she had been married to such a man. I saw her print a thousand kisses on it; and in the very fact I wrested it out of her hand.

BELINDA.

If I imagined him capable of what you say, I should scarcely be willing to join myself to him for life. Quarrel with me about his picture, and at the same time give it to another!

Sir JOHN.

Lady Restless had the picture. Without doubt, you must be very happy with a man of his gallantry.

BE-

BELINDA.

Happy, Sir! I should be miserable; distracted; I should break my heart. But do you think you have sufficient proof?

Sir JOHN.

I have seen him coming out of my house since, clandestinely, shunning every observant eye, with the characters of guilt in his face; and all the discourse I had with him, served only to convince me the more.

BELINDA.

Abandoned wretch! was this the love he professed for me? Sir, I have only to hope you will vindicate me in this matter. I commend myself to your honour, and I thank you for this favour.

Sir JOHN.

Our evidences will mutually speak for each other, and confound their dark designs. Madam, I take my leave.

BELINDA.

Sir, your most obedient.

Sir JOHN.

The gentleman shall feel my indignation.

BELINDA.

You cannot treat him too severely.

Sir

Sir JOHN.

I will expose him, I promise you. Madam, your
humble servant. *[Exit.]*

BELINDA.

Oh! Mr. Beverley, could I have imagined this?
False! false man! and yet how shall I forget him!
but I will make an effort, tho' it pierce me to the
quick. I will tear him from my heart. This mo-
ment I will write to him, and forbid him to see me
more. *[Exit.]*

SCENE, *the* PARK.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir JOHN.

If I can procure sufficient evidence, I shall bring
the matter to a divorce, and make an example of
them all. Would Marmalet were come: this is her
time to a moment. If I can worm the secret out of
her—Is not that she yonder?—Not quite day-light
enough to distinguish, but I think I perceive a per-
son masked. Hift! hift!—Mrs. Marmalet—she
comes this way: it is she. Mrs. Marmalet, your ser-
vant.

Enter a person MASKED.

Sir JOHN.

You are very good, Mrs. Marmalet—

MASK.

Bless my heart, I am scared out of my senses.

Sir

Sir JOHN:

What's the matter, pray? What's the matter?

MASK.

Oh Sir! I tremble like a leaf. I was accosted in a rude manner by some gentlemen yonder; I can't stay here, let us go into your house, Sir; I beg you will.

Sir JOHN.

My house? Would not any other house do as well?

MASK.

Oh! no, Sir; not for the world.

Sir JOHN.

Why my wife is not at home, and so I think I may venture: not but I had rather it were elsewhere.

MASK.

Indeed, Sir John, I am frightened out of my senses. You will do me a favour if you will take me into the house.

Sir JOHN.

Say no more: it shall be so. Robert—

ROBERT. (*opening the door*)

Is that Sir John?

Sir JOHN.

Your Lady is not at home, Robert, is she?

Ro-

ROBERT.

No, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

Then do you go in, and take care that nobody sees Mrs. Marmalet with me. Come, I'll shew you the way.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene in Sir JOHN's House.

Enter TATTLE, and BEVERLEY:

TATTLE. (*as she enters*)

Ay, poor lady! she is unfortunate, indeed; and, poor gentleman, he is as jealous as my Lady to the full. There has been a deal to do about that picture you mention, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

That will be explained presently: I'll wait till he comes home. I can't possibly go without speaking to him.

TATTLE.

Indeed, you had better not stay, Sir. You don't consider the mischief your being in the house may occasion.

BEVERLEY.

Mischief! how do ye mean?

TATTLE.

Lord, Sir! I would not have you stay for the world: I would not indeed. You can call again in
an

an hour, Sir, and you'll certainly find him at home, then. Bless my heart, Sir!—I fancy that's his voice. Do, dear Sir! you'll be the ruin of my Lady, If he sees you here, Sir, waiting in his house: he'll be persuaded you come after my Lady; the world will never beat it out of his head.

BEVERLEY.

But I shall give him to understand——

TATTLE.

He won't understand any thing. Oh Lud! oh! Lud! he's coming up: I'll run and look. [*Exit.*]

BEVERLEY.

What a flurry the woman is in! a foolish jade! I must speak with him now.

TATTLE. (*entering*)

It is he as I am alive, Sir; and there is a woman in a mask with him.

BEVERLEY.

A woman in a mask! Zoons, if that should be Belinda! my mind misgives me strangely! (*aside*)

TATTLE.

Do, dear Sir; you look like a good natured gentleman; let me hide you out of the way, Sir. You would not be the destruction of a poor servant.

BEVERLEY.

A mask coming home with him! I must know who that is. I won't leave the house without knowing.
If

If I could conceal myself—have you any private place, Mrs. Tattle?

TATTLE.

That is the very thing I mean, Sir. Let me conceal you in that closet till he passes through this room. He never stays long here. It won't take you two minutes. Do, sweet Sir, I'll down on my knees to you.

BEVERLEY.

I must know who it is. Come, dispose of me as you will. If this should be Belinda! *Exit.*

TATTLE.

Heavens bless you, Sir, for this goodness! I'll lock the door to make sure work of it. I was never so frightened in my life. [*Exit.*]

Enter Sir JOHN and a person masked.

Sir JOHN.

Mrs. Marmalet, I am obliged to you for this favour. I wanted a word or two with you.

MASK.

So Robert informed me, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

Did he tell you my business?

MASK.

No, Sir.

Sir

Sir JOHN.

Look ye then : if you will gratify me in what I shall ask, you may command any thing. Now you may be uncovered.

MASK.

La ! Sir—I hear a noise : I am afraid somebody's coming : I shall be seen.

Sir JOHN.

Hush ! no ; there's nobody. If you will indulge me on this occasion, I am yours for ever. Here, here is a purse of money for you.

MASK.

But if this should come to the knowledge of your Lady, I am ruined and undone.

Sir JOHN.

No, no, I'll take care of you.

MASK.

Will you, Sir ?

Sir JOHN.

I will. But come ; let me remove this from your face.

MASK.

But somebody may come.

Sir JOHN.

I'll lock the door. There, now we are safe.

MASK.

MASK.

But in a little time you'll make up all quarrels with your lady, and I shall be ruined.

Sir JOHN.

No, no, never fear: I shall never be reconciled to her: I hate her; I detest her.

Lady RESTLESS.

Do you so, Sir? (*unmasking*) Now, Sir John, what can you say now, Sir?

Sir JOHN.

My Lady Restless! Confusion! what shall I say?

Lady RESTLESS.

Oh, Sir John! Sir John! what evasion have you now, Sir? Can you deny your guilt any longer?

Sir JOHN.

This is unlucky. That villain Robert has betrayed me. I can't explain myself to her now. Try what soothing will do.—My Lady Restless, if you will but have patience, this matter shall be explained.

Lady RESTLESS.

Explained, Sir!

Sir JOHN.

Yes, my dear, explained, and——

Lady RESTLESS.

My dear, too! the assurance of you!

Sir JOHN.

I say, my dear, for I still regard you; and this was all done to—to—cure you of your jealousy: all done to cure you of your jealousy.

Lady RESTLESS.

A fine way you have taken!

Sir JOHN.

Yes, yes; and so you will see presently: all to convince you how groundless your suspicions are; and then we shall live very happy together.

Lady RESTLESS.

Ay!

Sir JOHN.

I have no further suspicions of you. I see my error, and I want you to see your's. Ha! ha!—I have no suspicions: that will put her off her guard. (*aside*) My dear, compose your spirits, and—

Lady RESTLESS.

And do you think to deny every thing even in the face of conviction? Base, base man! I'll go this moment and write to my brother.

Sir JOHN.

Now you talk wildly. This is all raving: you make yourself very ridiculous. You do, indeed. I had settled all this on purpose, and contrived that it should come to your ears, and then I knew you would do just as you have done; and—then—I—I resolved to do just as I have done; only to hint to you,

you, that listeners seldom hear any good of themselves, and to shew you how wrong it is to be too suspicious, my dear: was it not well done?—ha! ha! ha!

Lady RESTLESS.

And do you laugh at me too, Sir? Make me your sport? I'll go and get pen and ink this moment.

Sir JOHN.

Oh! do so, Ma'am; do so—ha! ha! you'll only expose yourself: go and write, Madam—ha! ha! ha!—

Lady RESTLESS.

I will, Sir. (*going*) The door is locked. This won't succeed, Sir. I suppose you have the key. Ay! I'll lay my life you have, and some one or other of your creatures is locked in there.

Sir JOHN.

There, again! This is of a piece with all your vain surmises. Ha! ha! you are mighty silly, indeed, you are.

Lady RESTLESS.

I will search that closet. I am determined I will.

Sir JOHN.

Do so, Ma'am, do so. Ha! ha! I can't but laugh at her

Lady RESTLESS.

I'll have the door broke open, if you won't give me the key.

Sir JOHN.

Ha! ha! ha!—How you expose yourself.

Lady RESTLESS.

Will you give me the key, Sir?

Sir JOHN.

Ha! ha! ha! it is too ridiculous!

Lady RESTLESS.

Mighty well, Sir. Tattle!—who waits there? I will find out all your artifices. Tattle, I say.

Sir JOHN.

Tol de rol lol!—ha! ha! ha! a filly woman!

Enter TATTLE.

Lady RESTLESS.

Do you know any thing of the key of that closet, Tattle?

TATTLE.

The key, Ma'am! I have it, Ma'am.

Lady RESTLESS.

Give it to me.

TATTLE.

That is, I have it not, Ma'am. Don't have it, Ma'am, don't ask for it. (*aside to her*)

Lady

Lady RESTLESS.

Don't ask for it! but I will have it. Give me the key this instant.

Sir JOHN.

How! is she not willing to give it? There is something in this, then. Give the key this moment, you jade, give it to me.

Lady RESTLESS.

You shan't have it, Sir. What, you want to hinder me! give the key to me.

TATTLE.

Dear heart! I have lost it, Ma'am. Better not have it, Ma'am. (*aside*)

Sir JOHN.

Give it to me this moment, I say.

Lady RESTLESS.

If you don't let me have it, it is as much as your place is worth.

TATTLE.

The devil is in it! there it is then. Let me make my escape. [*Exit.*]

Lady RESTLESS.

Now, Sir, we shall see, now, now.

Sir JOHN.

Ay, now search, if you will, (*laughing at her*)

Lady RESTLESS. (*unlocking the door*)

You shall be found out, I promise you—Oh!
(*screams out*)

Sir JOHN.

What's the matter now?

Lady RESTLESS.

Heavens! who have we here?

Sir JOHN.

Oh there is somebody there then!

Enter BEVERLEY.

BEVERLEY.

Madam——(*bows to her*)

Sir JOHN.

By all that's false, here he is again!

Lady RESTLESS.

What, in the name of wonder, brings you here,
Sir?

Sir JOHN.

Oh Madam! you know his business, and I know his business; and the gentleman knows his business. There he is, Ma'am! there is the gentleman waiting for you; true to his appointment, you see. Sir, your humble servant. My Lady Restless, your humble servant. Now write to your brother; do. I should be glad to know what you can say now. Now now; is the case plain now?

Lady

Lady RESTLESS.

I am in amaze ! I don't know what to make of this.

BEVERLEY.

Sir, however odd this may appear——

Sir JOHN.

Ay ! now settle it between yourselves : give it what turn you will, Sir, she will confirm it. You need not be afraid, Sir ; you will agree in your story ; she is quick of invention, and I dare say you are pretty quick too !

BEVERLEY.

Sir, I must beg you will put no forced construction upon this matter.

Sir JOHN.

And you beg the same, Ma'am, don't you ?

BEVERLEY.

Sir, I beg to be heard. My business here is to desire you will return me the picture which you have in your possession ! it is now become dear to me, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

I dare say it is.

BEVERLEY.

And must be returned.

Sir JOHN.

It is of equal value to me. It shall rise in evidence against you both.

Lady RESTLESS.

Evidence against me! explain yourself. How did you get in here? What's your business? What brought you hither? What's your errand?

Sir JOHN.

Ay, Sir, speak; how did you get in here? What's your business? What brought you hither? What's your errand?

BEVERLEY.

Vexation! I am beset by them both at once.

Lady RESTLESS.

Speak, Sir, explain.

Sir JOHN.

Ay! Sir, explain,

BEVERLEY.

Sir, if you will give me leave, I will satisfy you entirely. I assure you, Sir, and you too, Ma'am, that the liberty I have taken with your closet is entirely owing to your maid, Tattle.

Sir JOHN.

The jade, I don't doubt it, Sir.

BE-

BEVERLEY.

To prevent, if possible, the interpretation now put upon seeing me in this house.

Sir JOHN.

And it was well contrived, Sir. Oh! my Lady Restless.

Lady RESTLESS.

By all that's just, I knew nothing of it.

BEVERLEY.

Nothing, upon my honour, Sir.

Sir JOHN.

Oh! I knew you would both agree.

BEVERLEY.

As I am a gentleman, I tell you the real fact.

Sir JOHN.

You need not, Sir: I know the real fact.

BEVERLEY.

I have no time to lose in frivolous altercation: I must now desire the picture, directly.

Sir JOHN.

I wish you a good evening.

BE-

BEVERLEY.

I shall not stir without it. I should be glad you would comply without a quarrel. I must be obliged to—

Sir JOHN.

Ay! now her prize-fighter begins. (*aside*) I desire you will quit my house, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

I am not to be trifled with. If you don't return it by fair means, I shall be forced to draw.

Sir JOHN.

There again now! she has set him on to cut my throat: But I will disappoint her. She is a worthless woman, and I won't fight about her. There, Sir, there is your trinket. I shall have proof sufficient without it.

BEVERLEY.

Upon my honour, Sir, you will have no proof of any transgression of mine. If you suspect your lady from these appearances, you wrong her much, I assure you.

Lady RESTLESS.

Sir, I desire you will explain all this.

BEVERLEY.

Call up your maid, Madam, and then—

Sir

Sir JOHN.

No, Sir, no more of it. I am satisfied. I wish you good night.

BEVERLEY.

When you are willing to listen to reason, I shall be ready to convince you of your error. Madam, you may depend I shall do justice to your honour upon all occasions. And now I take my leave.

[Exit.

Sir JOHN.

Now, my Lady Restless, now! you are thoroughly known! all your artifices are known; Mr. Beverley is known! my Lord Conquest is known.

Lady RESTLESS.

My Lord Conquest, Sir! I despise all your imputations. My Lord Conquest's maid, Sir! what can you say to that?

Sir JOHN.

Very well, Madam! 'tis now my turn to write to your brother, and I promise you I will do it.

Lady RESTLESS.

You will write, Sir! you will write! Well! his assurance is unequalled. (*aside*) You will write! That is pleasant indeed!—write, Sir; do; you will only expose your weakness—ha! ha! you make yourself very ridiculous! you do indeed!—ha! ha!

Sir

Sir JOHN.

'Sdeath! Madam, am I to be insulted with a contumelious laugh into the bargain!

Lady RESTLESS.

Why, my dear, this was all done—to—to—to—cure you of your jealousy; for I knew you would act as you have done, and so I resolved to do as I have done. Was it not well done, my dear? Ha! ha!

Sir JOHN.

Damnation! this is too much: it is beyond all patience.

Lady RESTLESS.

Ha! ha! ha! the tables are turned, I think (*sings and laughs.*)

Sir JOHN.

Let me tell you, it is no laughing matter. You are a vile woman; I know you, and the world shall know you: I promise you it shall.

Lady RESTLESS.

I am clear in my own conviction, and your slander I despise: nor shall your artifices blind me or my friends any longer. Sir, as you say, it is no laughing matter. I promise you, you shall never dishonour me again in this house.

Sir JOHN.

And I promise you, Madam, that you shall never dishonour me in any house.

Lady

Lady RESTLESS.

Injurious, false, perfidious man!

Sir JOHN.

Deceitful, wanton! wanton woman!

[Exeunt, at opposite doors.]

End of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT

ACT the FIFTH.

*Scene an Apartment at Mr. BLANDFORD'S.**Enter BELINDA.*

BELINDA.

UNgenerous, false, deceitful Beverley! under that fair appearance could I imagine that he harboured so much treachery? Attached to Lady Restless; engaged in a dishonourable intrigue with the wife of another, and yet professing an affection for me, with ardour professing it, and for me only! he is likely to regard the honour of the marriage-bed, who is ready to commit a trespass on the happiness of his neighbour. It was Providence sent Sir John Restless to pay me a visit. The whole is now brought to light, and, Mr. Beverley, I have done with you for ever. I shall now obey my father's commands. By giving my hand to Sir William Bellmont's son, I shall punish an undeserving libertine for his treachery.

Enter TIPPET.

BELINDA.

Well, Tippet, have you done as I ordered you?

TIPPET.

I have, Madam.

BE-

BELINDA.

The perfidious man ! did you ever know such behaviour ?

TIPPET.

He is a traitor, like the rest of them.

BELINDA.

After all the regard I professed for him ! after so many ardent vows and protestations as he has made me !

TIPPET.

The hours that he has sigh'd away at your feet !

BELINDA.

I will banish him from my thoughts. My resolution is fixed, and so I have told my father. Is Sir William Bellmont with him ?

TIPPET.

He is, Ma'am : they are both in close talk : they are over their glafs, and are so overjoyed at the change of your mind.

BELINDA.

And I applaud myself for what I have done.—Oh ! Mr. Beverley ! you have forced me to this extremity.—Here, take this letter, Tippet, and give it to him with your own hands.

TIPPET.

He shall have it. *(takes the letter)*.

BE-

BELINDA.

Where are all his letters ?

TIPPET.

Here, Ma'am. (*shews a parcel*)

BELINDA.

The bracelets, and the pocket book ?

TIPPET.

I have them safe.

BELINDA.

Very well : take his presents home to him ; and do you hear ? Bring me back all the foolish letters I writ to him.

TIPPET.

Never doubt me : I won't quit the house without them. Exchange is all fair.

BELINDA.

That letter will tell him, that though I now break with him in a manner, that may seem abrupt, his character and conduct have compelled me to it. Be sure you confirm that to him.

TIPPET.

He shall hear it all, and roundly too.

BELINDA.

Very well ; you may go.—Tippet,—ask his man.—as if from yourself,—carelessly,—as it were by accident,

cident,---whether his master has talked of me? And what he said, Tippet?

TIPPET.

I know Mr. Brush: I can wheedle it out of him, I warrant me.

BELINDA.

Get at the particulars: not that I care: I don't want to know any thing about the ungrateful man. It does not concern me now. My foolish weakness is over: let him care as little for me as I do for him: you may tell him so.

TIPPET.

Your message shan't lose in the carrying.

BELINDA.

Well, that's all: you may begone.

TIPPET.

Yes, Ma'am. (*going*)

BELINDA.

Mind what I have said.

TIPPET.

You may trust to me. (*going*)

BELINDA.

Don't forget a word of it.

TIPPET.

No, not a syllable. (*going*)

BELINDA.

And hark ye : tell him how easy, how composed I am. That will gall him. You see, Tippet, I am quite unconcerned. (*forcing a smile*)

TIPPET.

Yes, Ma'am : you don't seem to fret in the least.

BELINDA.

It is easy to perceive that I am not all disconcerted. You may see how gay I am upon the occasion. (*affecting to laugh*)

TIPPET. (*laughing*)

Oh ! yes, Ma'am : you make quite a laughing matter of it.

BELINDA.

Very true : a perfect air of indifference !---Well, I have done.---Tell him that upon no account will I ever exchange a word with him ; that I will never hear of him ; never think of him ; never see him ; and never, upon any consideration, admit the smallest intercourse ; no, never ; I will have no more to do with him.

TIPPET.

I have my lesson, Ma'am, and I am glad you are so resolved upon it. (*going*)

Enter a SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Mr. Beverley, Madam.

TIP-

TIPPET.

You must not let him up stairs: my Lady will never see his face.

BELINDA.

Yes, I think I may see him: shew him up. I will see him once more, and tell him all myself. It will come better from me, Tippet.

TIPPET.

Yes, Ma'am, you will do it with a better grace; and your resolution will melt away like a bit of sugar in your mouth.

BELINDA.

My resolution is not to be altered: you may withdraw, Tippet.

TIPPET.

Yes, Ma'am.—Ah! she has a hankering after him still.
[Exit.

BELINDA.

I shall now take my leave of him.—But then, my friend Clarissa! can I rob her of her lover? She has not deserved it at my hands. Though Mr. Beverley has deceived me, must I be false to honour, and to friendship?

Enter BEVERLEY.

BEVERLEY.

Belinda! how gladly do I once again behold—

BELINDA.

And with what resentment have not I reason to behold, Sir——

BEVERLEY.

You have, Belinda; you have reason I grant it: forgive the rash words my folly uttered.

BELINDA.

Mistake me not, Sir: it is not your words I quarrel with: your actions, Mr. Beverley, your actions, Sir!

BEVERLEY.

They are not to be extenuated: but surely, after the letter you honoured me with——

BELINDA.

Sir, I have heard every thing since I was guilty of that folly.

BEVERLEY.

Heard! what?

BELINDA.

Dissemble if you will: but this must be the last of our conversing together. My maid will return you whatever I have received from you: all my silly letters I must desire you to deliver to her; and then visit me no more, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

Belinda!---you will not wound me thus. Here is the picture which caused that unlucky mistake between
tween

tween us. I have recovered it from Sir John Restless.

BELINDA.

From my Lady Restless, Sir?

BEVERLEY.

Madam!

BELINDA.

Oh! fie, Sir; no more; I have done.

BEVERLEY.

You must, you must accept it. Thus on my knees I beg you. Will you, Belinda? (*takes her hand*)

BELINDA.

Leave me, Sir: let go my hand, Mr. Beverley: your falsehood——

BEVERLEY.

My falsehood! By all the ——

BELINDA.

Your falsehood, Sir: Sir John Restless has told me all; every circumstance.

BEVERLEY.

He has told you! what has he told? His life shall answer it.

BELINDA.

You have destroyed my peace of mind for ever.

Y 3

Nay,

Nay, you yourself have forced me into the arms of another.

BEVERLEY.

What do I hear?

BELINDA.

My Lady Restless will rejoice at the news: the event will not be unpleasing to her; but she is welcome: let her enjoy her triumph.

BEVERLEY.

You astonish me, Belinda: what does all this mean?

BELINDA.

It means, that, in obedience to the commands of a father, I have agreed to marry Mr. Bellmont.

BEVERLEY.

Mr. Bellmont!---him!---marry him! it is very well, Ma'am: I expected it would come to this, and my Lady Restless is only mentioned on this occasion, as a retort for my accusation about Sir John. I understand it; and, by Heaven! I believe that whole story.

BELINDA.

You do, Sir!

BEVERLEY.

I do: fool that I was to humble myself to you. My pride is now piqued, and I am glad, Madam, as glad as you can be, to break off for ever.

BE-

BELINDA.

Oh ! Sir, I can be as indifferent on my part. You have only to send me back my letters, and——

BEVERLEY.

Agreed, agreed. I'll go home this moment, and send them all. Before I go, Madam, here is your own picture, which you had given me with your own hands. Mr. Bellmont will be glad of it ; or Sir John Restless will be glad of it ; or any body will be glad of it : you need not be at a loss.

BELINDA.

Very like, Sir. (*takes the picture*) Tyrant, tyrant man ! to treat me in this barbarous manner. (*cries*)

BEVERLEY.

Tears ! Belinda ! (*approaching*)—Belinda !

BELINDA.

No more of your insidious arts. I will hear no more. Oh ! my heart, my heart will break. I did not think it was in your nature to behave as you have done ; but—farewel for ever. [*Exit.*

BEVERLEY.

Belinda ! hear me but speak. By Heaven, my Lady Restless—She is gone : 'fdeath ! I have been duped by her all this time ; I will now summon up all that is man within me, and in my turn despise her.

Enter TIPPET.

TIPPET.

If you are going home, Sir, I will take the things with me now.

BEVERLEY.

Yes, I am going : I will leave this detested——

TIPPET.

This abominable place, Sir. (*laughing at him*)

BEVERLEY,

This hell !

TIPPET.

Ha ! ha !—ay ! Sir, this hell.

BEVERLEY.

This mansion of perfidy, ingratitude, and fraud,

TIPPET,

Very right, Sir, let us go.

BEVERLEY.

And yet—Tippet, you must not stir. Indulge me but a little. It is all a misunderstanding, this.

TIPPET.

My lady will have no more to say to you. You may take the things, Sir : my lady resigns them to you, Sir.

BE-

BEVERLEY.

Oh! Tippet, use your interest with her. Keep them in the house till I return. I will clear up this whole matter presently. I must not lose her thus.

[*Exit.*]

TIPPET.

Poor gentleman! he seems in a lamentable way. Well, I fancy for my part he is a true lover after all; that's what I do; and my young lady, I fear, is——

Enter BELINDA.

TIPPET.

Madam, Madam, Madam, you are to blame; you are, indeed.

BELINDA.

Is he gone?

TIPPET.

He is, Ma'am.

BELINDA.

Did he say any thing? Was he uneasy? Or did he carry it off with a——

TIPPET.

Oh! Madam, he went away fighting short, his heart throbbing, his eyes brimful, his looks pale: you are to blame, you are, indeed, Madam. I dare be sworn he has never proved false.

BE-

BELINDA.

Oh ! Tippet, could I be sure of that !

TIPPET.

But you are not sure of the contrary. Why won't you see my Lady Restless? See her directly, Madam; go to her now before it is too late; before the old folks, who are putting their heads together, have settled the whole affair. Dear Ma'am, be advised. I hear them coming. They will hurry you into a match, and you'll repent of it. How cruel this is! Here they come.—No, it's Madam Clarissa.

Enter CLARISSA.

CLARISSA.

So, Belinda; you have thrown things into fine confusion. You have involved yourself, and my brother, and Mr. Bellmont, and every body in most terrible difficulties.

BELINDA.

My dear Clarissa, here have been such doings between your brother and me.

CLARISSA.

So I find. I met him as I came hither. You have had fine doings indeed. I have heard the whole; my brother has told me every thing.

TIPPET.

Madam, Madam; I hear your father. Sir William Bellmont is with him; they are coming up stairs.

BE=

BELINDA.

I am not in a disposition to see them now. Clarissa suspend your judgment; step with me to my own room, and I will then give you such reasons as, you will own yourself, sufficiently justify my conduct.

CLARISSA.

The reasons must be ingenious, that can make any kind of apology for such behaviour: I shall be glad to hear you,

BELINDA.

Very well, follow me quickly. You will find that my resolution is not so rash as you imagine.

[*Exit with* CLARISSA.

TIPPET.

They have got into a rare puzzle; and how they will get out of it, is beyond my dexterity; and so let 'em manage as well as they can.

Enter BLANDFORD, Sir WILLIAM, and Young BELLMONT.

BLANDFORD.

Sir William, we have made a good day's work of it: the writings will be ready to-morrow morning. Where is Belinda? I thought she was in this room.

TIPPET.

She is gone to her own room, Sir: she is not well.

Sir

Sir WILLIAM.

She has changed her mind, perhaps: I shall have no faith in this business, till it is all concluded.

BLANDFORD.

Changed her mind, say you? No, no; I can depend upon her. I'll bring her to you this moment, and you and your son shall hear a declaration of her mind out of her own lips. Tippet, where is Belinda?

TIPPET.

I'll shew you the way, Sir. [*Exit with Blandford.*]

Sir WILLIAM.

Now we shall see what authority you have over your daughter. I have your promise, George: if she consents, you will be ready to comply with the wishes of your father.

BELLMONT.

Sir,—you may depend, that is as far as matters are in my power: but you know, as I told you already, the lady has a settled, rooted aversion to me.

Sir WILLIAM.

Aversion!—she can change her mind, can't she? Women have no settled principle. They like to-day, and dislike to-morrow. Besides, has not her father promised her to you in marriage? If the old gentleman likes you, what have you to do with her aversion?

BELL-

BELLMONT.

To do with it? A great deal, I am afraid. You are not now to learn, that, when a young lady marries against her inclination, billet-doux, assignations, plots, intrigues, and a terrible *et cætera* of female stratagem, mount into her brain, and the poor husband in the mean time—

Sir WILLIAM.

Come, lad, don't play the rogue with your father. Did not you promise me, if she made no objection, that there would be no obstacle on your part?

BELLMONT.

I promised to be sure, but yet I can't help thinking—

Sir WILLIAM.

And I can't help thinking that you know how to equivocate. Look you, George, your words were plain downright English, and I expect that you will perform to the very letter. I have fixed my heart upon this match. Mr. Blandford and I have passed the day at the Crown and Rolls to read over the deeds. I have been dining upon parchment as I may say. I now tell you once for all, you must be observant of my will and pleasure.

BELLMONT.

To end all dispute, Sir, if the lady—(*aside*) She will never consent; I may safely promise.—If the lady, Sir, can at once forget her engagements with my friend Beverley—

Sir

Sir WILLIAM.

You will then forget Clarissa: fairly spoken. Come, I am satisfied. And now, now we shall see.

Enter BLANDFORD.

BLANDFORD.

Sir William give me joy: every thing goes as I wish. My daughter is a complying girl. She is ready to obey my commands. Clarissa is with her, beseeching, wrangling; complaining, soothing; now in a rage, and now in tears; one moment expostulating, and the next imploring; but all in vain; Belinda holds her resolution; and so young gentleman you are now completely happy.

BELLMONT.

Death to my hopes! can this be true? (*aside*)

BLANDFORD.

Sir William give me your hand upon it. This will not only be a match of prudence, but of inclination.

Sir WILLIAM.

There, George, there is news for you: your business is done.

BLANDFORD.

She owns very frankly that her heart has been hitherto fixed upon a worthless man: she renounces him for ever, and is willing to give her hand as I shall direct.

BELL-

BELLMONT.

What a dilemma am I brought into? (*aside*)

Sir WILLIAM.

George, what's the matter, boy? You a bridegroom? Wounds! at your age I could cut a caper over the moon upon such an occasion.

BELLMONT.

I am more slack-mettled, Sir: I cannot leap quite so high.

Sir WILLIAM.

A cup too low, I fancy. Let us go and finish our bottle. Belinda shall be my toast. I'll give you her health in a bumper. Come, Mr. Blandford: I want to wash down the cobwebs of the law. [*Exit.*]

BLANDFORD.

I attend you, Sir William.—Mr. Bellmont, follow us: we must have your company: you are under par: come, we will raise you a note higher.

[*Exit.*]

BELLMONT.

You have sunk me so low, that I shall never recover myself. This behaviour of Belinda's!—Can she think her treachery to one lover will recommend her to another?

Enter CLARISSA.

CLARISSA.

Mr. Bellmont, I wish you joy, Sir. Belinda has
con-

sented; and you have done the same. You are both consenting. The match is a very proper one. You will be finely paired.

BELLMONT.

You are misinformed, Clarissa; why will you do me this injustice?

CLARISSA.

Injustice! Mr. Blandford has reported every thing: he has done you justice: he has told us how easily you have been persuaded: don't imagine that I am hurt. I resign all pretensions: I can be prevailed upon with as much ease as you, Sir: I can copy the easy compliance of Mr. Bellmont.

BELLMONT.

If you will but hear me: moderate your anger.

CLARISSA.

Anger!—anger indeed! I should be sorry any thing that has happened were of consequence enough to disturb my peace of mind.—Anger!—I shall die with laughing at the thought. You may be false to your friends, Sir; false to your vows; you may break every solemn engagement; Mr. Blandford wishes it; Belinda wishes it; and why should not you comply? Follow the dictates of your heart, Sir.

BELLMONT.

Whatever has happened, Clarissa, I am not to blame.

CLARISSA.

I dare say not; and here is a lady will say the same.

Enter

Enter BELINDA.

BELINDA.

Spare your reproaches, Clarissa.—Mr. Bellmont, you too may spare me. The agitations of my mind distress me so, I know not which way to turn myself. The provocation I have had——

CLARISSA.

Provocation, Madam!—from whom?

BELINDA.

From your brother: you need not question me; you know what his conduct has been.

BELLMONT.

By Heaven you wrong him; and so you will find in the end.

CLARISSA.

Your own conduct, Madam! will that stand as clear as my brother's? My Lady Restless, I believe, has something to say. It will become you to refute that charge.

BELINDA.

Downright malice, my dear: but I excuse you for the present.

Enter TIPPET.

TIPPET. (*to Belinda*)

Your chair is ready, Ma'am.

BELINDA.

Very well: I have not a moment to lose: I am determined to know the bottom of this whole affair. Clarissa, when I return, you will be better disposed to hear me.

CLARISSA.

You need not trouble yourself, Ma'am: I am perfectly satisfied.——Tippet, will you be so good as to order my chair?

BELINDA.

Well; suspend your judgement. This business is of importance: I must leave you now.

[Exit with Tippet.]

BELLMONT.

Clarissa, if you knew how all this wounds me to the heart.

CLARISSA.

Oh! keep your resolution; go on with your very honourable design: inclination should be consulted; and the necessity of the case, you know, will excuse you to the world.

BELLMONT.

Command your temper, and the whole shall be explained.

CLARISSA.

It wants no explanation: it is too clear already.

BELL-

BELLMONT.

A moment's patience would set every thing right.—'Sdeath! one would imagine that Lad Restless had been speaking to you too. This is like the rest of them: downright jealousy!

CLARISSA.

Jealousy!—Upon my word, Sir, you are of great consequence to yourself: but you shall find that I can with perfect serenity banish you, and your Belinda, entirely from my thoughts.

Enter TIPPET.

TIPPET.

The chairmen are in the hall, Ma'am.

BELLMONT.

Let me but speak to you.

CLARISSA.

No, Sir: I have done: I shall quit this house immediately. (*going*) Mrs. Tippet, could you let me have pen, ink, and paper, in your lady's room?

TIPPET.

Every thing is ready there, Ma'am.

CLARISSA.

Very well:—I'll go and write a letter to Belinda. I'll tell her my mind, and then adieu to all of you.

[*Exit with Tippet.*]

BELLMONT.

How perverse and obstinate!

Enter Sir WILLIAM.

Sir WILLIAM.

Well, George, every thing is settled.

BELLMONT.

Why really, Sir, I don't know what to say. I wish you would consider——

Sir WILLIAM.

At your tricks again?

BELLMONT.

I am above an attempt to deceive you : but if all circumstances were known—I am not fond of speaking detractingly of a young lady ; but for the honour of your family, Sir, let us desist from this match.

Sir WILLIAM.

Roguery, lad ! there's roguery in this.

BELLMONT.

I see you will force me to speak out. If there is, unhappily, a flaw in Belinda's reputation——

Sir WILLIAM.

How?

BELL-

BELLMONT.

This is no time to dissemble. In short, Sir, my Lady Restless, a worthy lady here in the neighbourhood, has discovered a connection between her and Sir John Restless; Sir John and Lady Restless lived in perfect harmony till this affair broke out. The peace of the family is now destroyed. The whole is come to the knowledge of my friend Beverley: with tears in his eyes, with a bleeding heart, (for he loved Belinda tenderly) he has at last mustered up resolution, and taken his final leave.

Sir WILLIAM.

Ay! can this be true?

BELLMONT.

It is but too true; I am sorry to report it. And now, Sir, judge yourself—Oh!—here comes Mr. Blandford: 'tis a dreadful scene to open to him; a terrible story for the ear of a father! You had best take no notice: we need not be accessory to a young lady's ruin: it is a family affair, and we may leave them to patch it up among themselves, as well as they can.

Sir WILLIAM.

If these things are so, why then the case is altered.

Enter BLANDFORD.

BLANDFORD.

Hey! what's in the wind now? You two look as grave! what's come over you? For my part, my spirits are above proof with joy: I am in love with

my daughter for her compliance, and I fancy I shall throw in an odd thousand more, to enliven the honey-moon.

Sir WILLIAM.

Mr. Blandford, we are rather in a hurry, I think. We had better not precipitate matters.

BLANDFORD.

Nay, if you are for changing your mind—Look you, Sir; my daughter shall not be trifled with. Where is she? Where is my girl? Who answers there?

Enter TIPPET.

BLANDFORD.

Where's Belinda?

TIPPET.

She is not gone far, Sir: just stept out upon a moment's business to Sir John Restless.

Sir WILLIAM.

Gone to Sir John Restless! (*aside*)

BELLMONT.

You see, Sir. (*to Sir William*)

BLANDFORD.

I did not think she knew Sir John.

Sir

Sir WILLIAM.

Yes, she knows him: she has been acquainted with him for some time past.

BLANDFORD.

What freak has she got in her head? She is not gone after her Mr. Beverley, I hope. Zookers! this has an odd appearance. I don't like it: I'll follow her this moment.

Sir WILLIAM.

You are right: I'll attend you.—Now George, this will explain every thing. (*aside*)—Come, Mr. Blandford, this may be an escape: young birds will wing their flight.

BLANDFORD.

Well, well, say no more: we shall see how it is. Come, Sir William: it is but a step. [*Exit.*

BELLMONT. (*to Tippet*)

Where is Clarissa?

Sir WILLIAM. (*looking back*)

What loitering, George?

BELLMONT.

I follow you, Sir. (*Exit Sir William*) Clarissa is not gone, I hope.

TIPPET.

Gone, Sir!—She is writing, and crying, and wip-
Z 4 ing

ing her eyes, and tearing her paper, and beginning again, and in such a piteous way!

BELLMONT.

I must see her: she must come with us. If Lady Restless persists in her story, who knows what turn this affair may take? Come; Mrs. Tippet, shew me the way. *[Exeunt.]*

Scene the Hall in the House of Sir JOHN RESTLESS: a loud rap at the door; and enter ROBERT.

ROBERT.

What a hurry you are in there?—This is my Lady, I suppose. Where can she have been?—Now for more confusion. If she finds Madam Belinda with Sir John, we are all blown up again.

Sir JOHN. *(peeping in)*

Robert, Robert: is that your Lady?

ROBERT.

Mercy on us! She is coming, I believe, Sir. *(looks out)* I see her chair: it is my Lady.

Sir JOHN.

Don't let her know that Belinda is in the house.

ROBERT.

Not if I can help it. Trust to me, Sir. *(Exit Sir John)* Here she comes. What has she been about?

A Chair

A Chair is brought into the Hall.

Lady RESTLESS. (*coming out of the Chair*)
Is Sir John at home!

ROBERT.
I fancy he is, my Lady.

Lady RESTLESS.
Has any body been with him?

ROBERT.
He has been all alone, writing letters in his study :
he desired not to be interrupted.

Lady RESTLESS.
I shall not interrupt him, I promise him. You
never will tell me any thing, Robert : I don't care
who comes after him. To-morrow I shall quit this
house, and then he may riot in licentious pleasure. If
he asks for me, I am not well ; I am gone to my own
apartment : I hope to see no more of him. (*going*)

CHAIRMAN.
Shall your Ladyship want the chair any more to-
night?

Lady RESTLESS.
I don't know what I shall want. Leave the chair
there : you may wait. [*Exit.*

CHAIRMAN.
Ay ! always a waiting job.
(*puts the chair aside ; Exeunt Chairman, and Robert.*)

Enter

Enter Sir JOHN and BELINDA.

BELINDA.

If you will but permit me to say a word to her—

Sir JOHN.

Excuse me for the present: I beg you will.

BELINDA.

A short interview with Lady Restless might clear up all my doubts: what objection can you have?

Sir JOHN.

A million of objections. You do not know the consequence of being seen in this house. She will interpret every thing her own way. I am unhappy, Madam, while you stay.

BELINDA.

There is more cruelty in your refusal than you can imagine. Mr. Beverley's character is in question: it is of the last importance to me to know the whole truth.

Sir JOHN.

You know it all, Madam. Mr. Beverley's character is too clear. Proofs thicken, and grow stronger every hour. Since the visit I paid you this very day, I have made another discovery. I found him lurking here in my house.

BELINDA.

Found him here, Sir?

Sir

Sir JOHN.

Found him here. He was lying in ambush for another amorous meeting.

BELINDA.

If there is no mistake in this business——

Sir JOHN.

Mistake! May I trust my own eyes? I saw him; I spoke to him; I taxed him with his guilt. He was concealed in her closet: does that amount to proof? Her maid Tattle stationed him there. My Lady was privy to it: she favoured the stratagem. Are you satisfied now, Madam?

BELINDA.

The particulars of this discovery, Sir John, may convince me: tell me all, Sir: you will oblige me.

Sir JOHN.

Enquire no more for the present. You will oblige me, Madam. Robert shall see you safe home. I would not have my Lady find us together: I think I hear her: no, no. In a day or two the particulars will be known to the wide world. Where is Robert?—He shall conduct you home. My peace and happiness require it.

BELINDA.

My peace and happiness are destroyed for ever. If your story be true——

Sir

Sir JOHN.

It is too true : I wish you a good night. I am miserable while you are here.—Robert

BELINDA.

Deliver me ! I am ruined. I hear my father's voice : what brings him hither ? I am undone if he finds me. Let me retire into that room.

Sir JOHN.

That room will not do : you will be seen there.

BELINDA.

Can't I go up stairs ? (*going*)

Sir JOHN.

No ; I am ruined, if you go that way.—Hell and distraction !—My Lady Restless coming down ! Here, Madam, here ; into that chair. You will be concealed there : nobody will suspect you.

BELINDA.

Any where, Sir : put me any where, to avoid this impending storm. (*goes into the chair*)

Sir JOHN. (*shutting the chair*)

This is lucky. I am safe now. Let my Lady come as soon as she will.

Enter Lady RESTLESS.

Lady RESTLESS.

I only wanted to say one word, Sir.

Enter

Enter BLANDFORD.

BLANDFORD.

Sir John, I am obliged to intrude : I am told my daughter is here.

Lady RESTLESS.

There ! he has heard it all.

BLANDFORD.

I have heard that Belinda came to your house : on what business, I do not know. I hope, Sir John, that you do not harbour the girl to disturb the peace and happiness of a father.

Sir JOHN.

That imputation, Sir——

Lady RESTLESS.

He does harbour her.

Sir JOHN.

Mr. Blandford, I give you my honour——

Lady RESTLESS.

I know he does. He has ruined your daughter ; he has injured you, Sir, as well as me in the most essential point.

Sir JOHN.

She raves ; she is mad. If you listen to her——

Enter

Enter Sir WILLIAM, and BEVERLEY.

BLANDFORD.

I am glad you are come, Sir William. This more than I expected.

Sir JOHN.

And more than I expected. There, Madam, there is your favourite again !

BEVERLEY.

My visit is public, Sir. I come to demand, in the presence of this company, an explanation of the mischief you have done me.

Sir JOHN.

You need not be so public, Sir. The closet is ready for you : Tattle will turn the key, and you will there be very safe.

Lady RESTLESS.

How can you persist in such a fallacy ? He knows, he perfectly well knows it was an accident ; a mere blunder of the servant, entirely unknown to me.

Sir JOHN.

She was privy to the whole.

BLANDFORD.

This is beside my purpose. I came hither in quest of my daughter : a father demands her. Is she here ? Is she in the house.

Sir

Sir JOHN.

In this house, Sir? Our families never visited. I am not acquainted with her.

Lady RESTLESS.

He is acquainted with her. I saw him clasp her in his arms.

BLANDFORD.

In his arms! When? Where? Tell me all.

Lady RESTLESS.

Yes, now let him give an account of himself.

Sir JOHN.

When you have accounted for your actions, Madam——

Lady RESTLESS.

Render an account to the lady's father, Sir.

BLANDFORD.

Yes, to her father. Account with me, Sir. When and where was all this?

Lady RESTLESS.

This very day; at noon; in the Park.

BEVERLEY.

But in the eyes of the whole world: I know Belinda: I can acquit her.

Sir

Sir JOHN.

And I proclaim her innocence. We can both acquit her. (*goes up to Beverley*)

Lady RESTLESS.

You are both in a plot: both combined.

Sir JOHN.

It was all harmless; all inoffensive. Was not it Mr. Beverley?

BEVERLEY.

Yes, all, all.

Lady RESTLESS.

All guilt; manifest, downright guilt.

Sir WILLIAM.

If you all talk together, we shall never understand.

BEVERLEY.

I understand it all.—Mr. Blandford you met Belinda in the Park this morning?

BLANDFORD.

I did, Sir.

BEVERLEY.

You accosted her violently: the harshness of your language overpowered her spirits: she was ready to faint: Sir John was passing by: she was going to drop down: Sir John assisted her: that is the whole of the story. Injured as I am, I must do justice to Belinda's

da's character. She may treat me with the caprice and pride of insolent beauty; but her virtue claims respect.

Sir JOHN.

There now; there! that is the whole of the story.

Lady RESTLESS.

The whole of the story! no, Sir John: you shall suppress nothing: you could receive a picture from her.

Sir JOHN.

You, Madam, could receive a picture; and you, Mr. Beverley, could present it.

Lady RESTLESS.

Mr. Beverley, you hear this!

BEVERLEY.

I can justify you, Madam. I gave your Lady no picture, Sir John.

Sir JOHN.

She had it in her hand. I saw her print her kisses on it, and in that moment I seized it from her.

BEVERLEY.

Belinda dropt it in the Park, when she was taken ill: I had just given it to her. Your Lady found it there.

Lady RESTLESS.

I found it on that very spot.

BEVERLEY.

There, Sir ; she found it.

Sir JOHN.

I found you locked up in her cabinet ; concealed in private.

Lady RESTLESS.

But with no bad intent.

Sir JOHN.

With the worst intent.

BEVERLEY.

Your jealousy, Sir John, has fixed an imputation upon me, who have not deserved it : and your suspicions, Madam, have fallen, like a blasting mildew, upon a lady, whose name was never before sullied by the breath of calumny.

Sir WILLIAM.

The affair is clear as to your daughter, Mr. Blandford. I am satisfied, and now we need not intrude any longer upon this family. (*Enter Bellmont and Clarissa.*) Walk in, George : every thing is right : your fears may now go to rest.

Lady RESTLESS.

I shall not stay another night in this house. Time will explain every thing. Call my chairmen there. Sir John has it his own way at present. (*Enter chairmen.*) You have settled this among yourselves. I shall now go to my brother's. Sir John I have no more to say at present. Hold up. (*goes to the chair.*)

Sir

Sir JOHN.

Let the chair alone. You shall not go : you shall not quit this house, till I consent. (*goes between her and the chair.*)

Lady RESTLESS.

I say hold up.

Sir JOHN.

Let it alone.

Lady RESTLESS.

Very well, Sir : I must be your prisoner, must I ?

Sir JOHN.

It is mine to command here. No loose escapes this night ; no assignations ; no intrigues to disgrace me.

Lady RESTLESS.

Such inhuman treatment ! I am glad there are witnesses of your behaviour. (*walks away*)

BLANDFORD.

I am sorry to see all this confusion ; but since my daughter is not here——

Lady RESTLESS.

He knows where she is, and so you will find.

Sir JOHN. (*coming forward.*)

Your daughter is innocent, Sir, I give you my honour. Where should she be in this house ? Lady Restless has occasioned all this mischief. She formed a story to palliate her own misconduct. To her various artifices you are a stranger ; but in a few days you may depend——

A a 2

Lady

Lady RESTLESS. (*aside, as she goes towards the chair.*)
He shall find that I am not to be detained here.
(*makes signs to the chairmen to hold up.*)

Sir JOHN.

I say, gentlemen, you may depend that I have full proof, and in a little time every thing will—(*the chair is opened, and Belinda comes out.*)

Lady RESTLESS.

Who has proof now? There, there! in his house all the time!

BLANDFORD.

What do I see?

BEVERLEY.

Belinda here!

Sir WILLIAM.

So, so! there is something in it, I see.

Sir JOHN.

Distraction! this is unlucky.

Lady RESTLESS.

What say you now, Mr. Beverley?—Now Mr. Blandford! there; ocular demonstration for you!

Sir WILLIAM.

George, take Clarissa as soon as you will. Mr. Blandford, you will excuse me, if I now decline any further treaty with you.

BLANDFORD.

This abrupt behaviour, Sir William——

Sir

Sir WILLIAM.

I am satisfied Sir. I am resolved. Clarissa, you have my approbation: my son is at your service. Here, George, take her, and be happy.

BELLMONT. (*taking her hand*)

To you from this moment I dedicate all my future days.

BLANDFORD.

Very well: take your own way. I can still protect my daughter.

BEVERLEY.

And she deserves your protection: my dear Belinda explain all this: I know it is in your power.

BELINDA.

This generous behaviour, Sir, recalls me to new life. You, I am now convinced, have been accused by my Lady Restless without foundation. Whatever turn her Ladyship's unhappy self-tormenting fancy may give to my conduct, it may provoke a smile, but will excite no other passion.

Lady RESTLESS.

Mighty fine! what brought you to this house?

BELINDA.

To be a witness of your folly, Madam, and Sir John's into the bargain.

BELLMONT.

That I can vouch: Sir John can fill his mind with vain chimæras, with as apt a disposition as his Lady. Beverley has been represented in the falsest colours—

Lady RESTLESS.

That I admit: Sir John invented the story.

BEVERLEY.

And Belinda, Madam, has been cruelly slandered by you.

Sir JOHN.

She has so: that I admit.

BELINDA.

And my desire to see all this cleared up, brought me to this house, Madam. Now you see what has made this confusion.

Lady RESTLESS.

Oh! I expected these airs. You may discuss the point where you please: I will hear no more upon the subject. [Exit.]

BLANDFORD.

Madam, the subject must be settled. (*follows her.*)

Sir JOHN.

You have a right to insist upon it: The whole shall be explained this moment. Sir William, you are a dispassionate man. Give us your assistance. [Exit.]

Sir WILLIAM.

With all my heart. George, you are no longer concerned in this business, and I am glad of it.

[Exit, with young Bellmont.]

CLA-

CLARISSA. (*to Beverley.*)

Now Brother, now is your time : your difficulties are all removed. Sir John suspected you without reason : my Lady Restless did the same to Belinda : you are both in love, and now may do each other justice. I can satisfy my Lady Restless and your father.

[*Exit.*]

BEVERLEY. (*aside*)

I see, I see my rashness.

BELINDA. (*aside*)

I have been terribly deceived.

BEVERLEY.

If she would but forgive my folly.

BELINDA.

Why does not he open his mind to me ? I can^d speak first.

BEVERLEY.

What apology can I make her ?—Belinda !

BELINDA.

Charming ! he begins. (*aside, and smiling*)

BEVERLEY. (*approaching*)

Belinda !—no answer ?—Belinda !

BELINDA.

Mr. Beverley !—(*smiles aside*)

BEVERLEY.

Don't you think you have been very cruel to me,
Belinda? (*advancing towards her*)

BELINDA.

Don't you think you have been barbarous to me?
(*without looking at him*)

BEVERLEY.

I have : I grant it. Can you find in your heart to
forgive me?

BELINDA. (*without looking at him*)

You have kept me on the rack this whole day,
and can you wonder that I feel myself unhappy?

BEVERLEY.

I am to blame : I acknowledge it. If you knew
how my own heart reproaches me, you would spare
yourself the trouble. With tears in my eyes I now
speak to you : I acknowledge all my errors.

BELINDA. (*looking at him*)

Those are not tears, Mr. Beverley. (*smiling*)

BEVERLEY.

They are ; you see that they are.

BELINDA.

Ah ! you men can command tears.

Be-

BEVERLEY.

My life! my angel! (*kisses her hand*) Do you forgive me?

BELINDA.

No; I hate you. (*looking pleased at him*)

BEVERLEY.

Now, I don't believe that. (*kisses her cheek*) Do you hate me, Belinda?

BELINDA.

How could you let an extravagance of temper get the better of you? You know the sincerity of my affection. Oh, Mr. Beverley! was it not ungenerous?

BEVERLEY.

It was; I own it; on my knees I own it.

BELINDA. (*laughing*)

Oh! proud man! have I humbled you?—Since you submit to my will and pleasure, I think I can forgive you.—Beg my picture back this moment.

(*shews it to him*)

BEVERLEY. (*taking the picture*)

I shall adore it ever, and heal this breach with uninterrupted love.

Enter

Enter Sir JOHN, Lady RESTLESS, Sir WILLIAM, BLANDORD, BELLMONT *and* CLARISSA.

Sir JOHN. (*laughing*)

Why yes; it is very clear. I can now laugh at my own folly, and my wife's too.

Lady RESTLESS.

There has been something of a mistake, I believe.

BEVERLEY.

You see, Sir John, what your suspicions are come to. I never was within your doors before this day; nor should I, perhaps, have had the honour of speaking to your Lady, had it not been for the misunderstanding your mutual jealousies occasioned between Belinda and me.

BLANDFORD.

And your Ladyship has been ingenious enough to work out of those whimsical circumstances a charge against my daughter. Ha! ha!

Sir JOHN.

It is ever her way, Sir. I told you, my dear, that you would make yourself very ridiculous.

Lady RESTLESS.

I fancy, Sir, you have not been behind hand with me. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir WILLIAM.

And now, Mr. Blandford, I think we may as well let the match go on as we at first intended.

BLAND-

BLANDFORD.

No, no more of that: you have disposed of your son. Belinda, I no longer oppose your inclinations: take Mr. Beverley as soon as you will.

Sir JOHN.

Now let us see: if she agrees to marry him, why then, she knows he is innocent, and I shall be satisfied. (*aside*)

BELINDA.

If you insist upon it, Sir.

BLANDFORD.

I do insist.

Lady RESTLESS.

If Beverley accepts of her, all my suspicions are at an end. (*aside*)

BEVERLEY.

Thus let me take the bright reward of all my wishes. (*takes her hand*)

BELINDA.

Since it is over, you have used your authority, Sir, to make me happy indeed. We have both seen our error, and frankly confess that we have been in the wrong too.

Sir WILLIAM.

Why, we have been all in the wrong, I think.

Sir JOHN.

It has been a day of mistakes, but of fortunate ones, conducing at last to the advantage of all parties. My Lady Restless will now be taught——

Lady

Lady RESTLESS.

Sir John, I hope you will be taught——

BLANDFORD.

Never mention what is past. The wrangling of married people about unlucky questions that break out between them, is like the lashing of a top: it only serves to keep it up the longer.

Sir JOHN.

Very true: and since we have been ALL IN THE WRONG TO-DAY, we will, for the future, endeavour to be ALL IN THE RIGHT.

BEVERLEY.

A fair propofal, Sir John: we will make it our business, both you, who are married, and we, who are now entering into that state, by mutual confidence to ensure mutual happiness.

The God of Love, thinks we profane his fire,
When trifles light as air mistrust inspire.
But where esteem and gen'rous passions spring,
There reigns secure, and waves his purple wing;
Gives home-felt peace; prevents the nuptial strife;
Endears the bliss, and bids it last for life.

F I N I S.

EPI-

E P I L O G U E.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mrs. YATES.

BLESS me, this summer work is so fatiguing!
 And then our plays so bustling, so intriguing!
 Such miffing, sighing, scolding, all together!
 These love affairs suit best with colder weather.
 At this warm time these writers shou'd not treat you,
 With so much love, and passion,—for they'll beat you:
 Poets, like Weavers, should with taste and reason,
 Adapt their various goods to ev'ry season.
 For the hot months, the fanciful, and slight;
 For mind, and body, something cool and light:
 Authors themselves indeed neglect this rule;
 Dress warm in summer, and at Christmas cool.
 I told our Bard within, these five act plays,
 Are rich brocades, unfit for sultry days.
 Were you a cook, said I, wou'd you prepare,
 Large hams, and roasted sirloins for your fare?
 Their very smoke would pall a city glutton;
 A Tragedy would make you all unbutton!
 Both appetites now ask for daintier picking,
 Farce, pantomime, cold lamb, or white leg'd chicken.
 At Ranelagh fine rolls and butter see:
 Signor Tenducci, and the best green tea!
 Italian singing is as light as feather;
 Beard is too loud, too powerful for this weather!
 Vauxhall more solidly regales your palates;
 Champagne, cantata's, cold boil'd beef, and ballads.
 What shall we do your different tastes to hit?
 You relish satire; [to the pit] you ragouts of wit;

[boxes]

Your

Your taste is humour, and high season'd joke; [1st gall.]
 You call for hornpipes, and for Hearts of Oak! [2d gall.]
 O could I wish and have!—A conjuring man
 Once told my fortune,—and he charm'd this fan!
 Said with a flirt I might my will enjoy:
 Think you there's magic in this little toy?
 I'll try its pow'r; and, if I gain my wish,
 I'll give you, Sirs, a downright English dish.
 Come then; a song [music is heard] indeed! I see
 'twill do.
 Take heed gallants, I'll play the deuce with you.
 Whene'er I please, I'll charm you to my sight;
 And tear a FAN WITH FLIRTING ev'ry night.

Enter two BALLAD SINGERS, who sing the following Song.

S O N G.

YE Critics above, and ye Critics below,
 Ye finer spun Critics, who keep the mid row,
 O tarry a moment, I'll sing you a song,
 Shall prove that, like us, you are all in the wrong.

 Ye Poets, who mount on the fam'd winged steed,
 Of prancing, and wincing, and kicking take heed:
 For when by those hornets, the Critics, you're stung,
 You're thrown in the dirt, and are all in the wrong.

 Ye Actors, who act what these writers have writ,
 Pray stick to your Poet, and spare your own wit;
 For when with your own you unbridle your tongue,
 I'll hold ten to one you are all in the wrong.

 Ye Knaves, who make news for the foolish to read,
 Who print daily slanders the hungry to feed:
 For a while you mislead 'em, the news hunting throng,
 Till the pillory proves, you are all in the wrong.

Ye

*Ye grave Politicians, so deep and so wise,
With your hums, and your shrugs, and your uplifted eyes;
The road that you travel, is tedious and long,
But I pray you jog on; you are all in the wrong.*

*Ye happy fond husbands, and fond happy wives,
Let never suspicion embitter your lives;
Let your prudence be stout, and your faith be as strong;
Who watch, or who catch, they are all in the wrong.*

*Ye unmarried folks be not bought, or be sold,
Let age avoid youth, and the young ones the old;
For they'll soon get together, the young with the young,
And then my wise old ones, you're all in the wrong.*

*Ye soldiers and sailors, who bravely have fought,
Who honour and glory, and laurels have bought;
Let your foes but appear, you'll be at 'em ding dong,
And if they come near you, they're all in the wrong.*

*Ye judges of taste to our labours be kind,
Our errors are many, pray wink, or be blind;
Still find your way hither to glad us each night,
And our note we will change to you're all in the right.*

My dear friend,

I have just received your letter of the 10th inst.

and am very glad to hear from you.

I am well and hope this finds you the same.

I have not much news to write at present.

I am, my dear friend, very truly yours,

Wm. Lloyd Garrison

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THE
DESERT ISLAND,

A
DRAMATIC POEM,

IN
THREE ACTS.

Performed at the

THEATRE ROYAL

IN
DRURY - LANE.

Te, dulcis conjux, te solo in littore secum,
Te veniente die, te decedente canebat.

VOL. III.

B b

VIRG.

THE
DESERT ISLAND

DRAMATIC POEM

IN
THREE ACTS

THEATRE ROYAL

IN
DRURY-LANE

The whole is copied, as also in the original
The venient die, se accedente caritate

Vol. III. F. B. Vire.

P R O L O G U E.

Written and spoken by Mr. GARRICK,

In the Character of a DRUNKEN POET.

*ALL, all shall out; all that I know and feel;
I will by Heav'n to higher powers appeal!
Behold a Bard! no Author of to-night!
No, no, they can't say that, with all their spite:
Ay, you may frown (looking behind the scenes) I'm at
you, great and small;
Your Poet, Players, Managers and all!
These fools within here, swear that I'm in liquor:
My passion warms me, makes my utt'rance thicker:
I totter too; but that's the gout and pain:
French wines, and living high, have been my bane.
From all temptations now, I wisely steer me;
Nor will I suffer one fine woman near me.
And this I sacrifice, to give you pleasure:
For you I've coin'd my brains, and here's the treasure.
(pulls out a Manuscript)*

*A treasure this, of profit and delight!
And all thrown by for this damn'd stuff to-night!
This is a play would water ev'ry eye!
If I but look upon't, it makes me cry.
This play would tears from blood-stain'd soldiers draw,
And melt the bowels of hard-hearted law!
Would fore and aft the storm-proof sailor rake;
Keep turtle-eating Aldermen awake!*

*Would the cold blood of ancient maidens thrill,
And make ev'n pretty younger tongues lie still.
This play not ev'n Managers would refuse,
Had Heav'n but giv'n 'em any brains to chuse!*

(puts up his Manuscript)

*Your Bard to-night, bred in the ancient school,
Designs and measures all by critic rule;
'Mongst friends it goes no farther—He's a fool,
So very classic, and so very dull,
His Desert Island is his own dear skull.
No soul to make the Playhouse ring, and rattle,
No trumpets, thunder, ranting, storms, or battle!
But all your fine poetic prittle prattle.
The plot is this—A lady's cast away;
“ Long before the beginning of the play ;”
And they are taken by a fisherman,
The lady and the child—'tis Bays's plan :
So on he blunders—He's an Irishman.
'Tis all alike ; his comic stuff I mean ;
I hate all humour ; it gives me the spleen ;
So damn 'em both, with all my heart, unsight, unseen. *
But should you ruin him, still I'm undone :
I've try'd all ways to bring my Phoenix on.*

(shewing his play again)

*Flatter I can with any of their tribe ;
Can cut and slash ; indeed I cannot bribe.
What must I do then ?—Beg you to subscribe.*

* The Way to Keep Him, in three acts, was presented as the after piece on the same night.

Be kind ye boxes, galleries, and pit :

'Tis but a crown a-piece for all this wit :

All sterling wit ! to puff myself I hate :

You'll ne'er supply your wants at such a rate !

'Tis worth your money, I would scorn to wrong ye :

You smile consent ; I'll send my hat among ye.

(going, he returns)

So much beyond all praise your bounties swell !

Not my own tongue, my gra-ti-tude can tell.

" A little flattery sometimes does well."

(staggers off)

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

FERDINAND, Husband to	} Mr. HOLLAND.
CONSTANTIA,	
HENRICO, Friend to FER-	} Mr. FLEETWOOD.
DINAND,	

W O M E N.

CONSTANTIA,	Mrs. PRITCHARD.
SYLVIA, her Daughter,	Miss PRITCHARD.

SCÈNE, *A Desert Island.*

THE DESERT ISLAND.

A C T the F I R S T.

The scene represents a vale in the Desert Island, surrounded by rocks, caverns, grottos, flowering shrubs, exotic trees, and plants growing wild. On one side is a cavern in a rock, over the entrance of which appears, in large characters, an unfinished inscription. CONSTANTIA is discovered at work at the inscription, in a romantic habit of skins, leaves, and flowers: in her hand she holds a broken sword, and stands in act to finish the imperfect inscription.

After a short pause, she begins.

REST, rest my arm; ye weary sinews, rest:
Awhile forget your office. On this rock
Here sit thee down, and think thyself to stone.

(sits down)

Would Heav'n I could! *(rises)* Ye shrubs, ye name-
less plants,

That, wildly-gadding, 'midst the rifted rocks
Wreath your fantastic shoots; ye darksome trees,
That spread yon verdant arch above my head,
Shadowing this solemn scene; ye moss-grown caves,
Romantic grottos,—all ye objects drear!
Tell me, in pity tell me, have ye seen,
Thro' the long series of revolving time,
In which you have inclos'd this lonely mansion,
Say, have ye seen another wretch like me?
No, never! You, in tenderest sympathy,

B b 4

Hav

Have join'd my plaints : you, at the midnight hour,
 When with uprooted hair I've strew'd the earth,
 And call'd my husband gone ; have call'd in vain
 Perfidious Ferdinand ! you, at that hour,
 Have waken'd echo in each vocal cell,
 Till ev'ry grove, and ev'ry green hill round,
 Mourn'd to my griefs responsive. Well you know
 The story of my woes : ev'n yonder marble
 Relenting feels the touch ; receives each trace
 That forms the melancholy tale.—Tho' rude,
 And inexpert my hand ; tho' all uncouth
 The instrument, yet there behold my work
 Well nigh complete. Let me about it straight.

(she advances toward the rock)

Ye deep engraven letters, there remain ;
 And if in future time resistless fate
 Shall throw some Briton on this dismal shore ;
 Then speak aloud ; to his astonish'd sense
 Relate my sad, my memorable case :
 Alarm his soul, call out——

STOP TRAVELLER.

HERE

CONSTANTIA,

WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,

SYLVIA,

WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,

THE PERFIDIOUS

FERDINAND ;

WHO PRETENDING TO LAND HER

FOR REFRESHMENT

FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,

BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER

ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,

WHERE SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

FRIEND!

FRIEND!

WHOE'ER THOU ART,

PITY MY WRONGS,

BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND,

(FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET
WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)

I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE R——

Revenge!—the word Revenge is wanting still.

Ye holy pow'rs! if with one pitying look

You'll deign to view me, grant my earnest pray'r!

Let me but finish this my sad inscription,

Then let this busy, this afflicted heart

Be still at once, and beat my breast no more.

*(she goes on with her work)**Enter SYLVIA.*

SYLVIA.

My dearest mother! Oh! quite out of breath.

CONSTANTIA.

What is the matter, child?

SYLVIA:

My flutt'ring heart

Beats wild with joy. Oh! such an incident!

CONSTANTIA.

What incident, my sweet?

SYLVIA.

My little fawn,

My dear, my loveliest fawn, for many days

Whose

Whose loss I've mourn'd; for whose dear sake I've
left

No corner of the Isle unsearch'd; this moment,
O'er the dew-spangled lawn, with printless feet,
Came bounding to me; playful frisk'd about
With inexpressive airs of glad surprize,
With eager signs of transport: big round tears
Stood trembling in his eye, and seem'd to speak
His fond regret still mingling with his joy.

CONSTANTIA.

And is it that, my love, delights thee so?

SYLVIA.

And can you wonder, Ma'am? Yes, that delights
me,

Transports me, charms me: he's my darling care,
My dear companion, my sweet little friend,
That loves me, gambols round me, watches still
With anxious tenderness my ev'ry motion,
Pants on my bosom, leaps into my arms,
And wanders o'er me with a thousand kisses.
Before this time, he never once stray'd from me.
I thought I lost him; but he's found again!
And can you wonder I'm transported thus?

CONSTANTIA.

Oh! happy state of innocence! how sweet
Thy joys, simplicity, e'er yet the mind
With artificial passions learns to glow;
Ere taste has ta'en our senses to her school,
Has given each well-bred appetite her laws,
Taught us to feel imaginary blifs,
Or else expire in elegance of pain.

SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

Nay, now, again, you're growing grave: 'tis you
Give laws to appetite; forbid each sense
To minister delight. Your eyes are dimm'd
With constant tears; the roses on your cheek
Fade like yon violets, when excessive dews
Have bent their drooping, melancholy heads.
Soon they repair their graces; soon recal
Their aromatic lives, and smiling yield
To sighing Zephyr all their balmy sweets.
To grief you're still a prey: still wan despair
Sits with'ring at your heart, and ev'ry feature
Has your directions to be fixed in woe.
Nay, pr'ythee dry those tears: you make me sad.
Will you, at length, forget your cares?

CONSTANTIA.

Forget!

Oh! sweet oblivion, thy all healing balm
To wretches you refuse! Can I forget
Perfidious Ferdinand? His tyrant form
Is ever present: the deluding looks,
Endearing accents, and the soft regards
With which he led me to yon moss-clad cave,
There to repose awhile. Oh! cruel man!
And you, ye conscious wilds, I call you false!
Accomplices in guilt! The Zephyrs bland
That pant upon each leaf; the melody
That warbles thro' your groves; the falling foun-
tains,
That at each deep'ning cadence lull the mind,
Were all suborn'd against me; all conspir'd
To wrap me in the silken folds of sleep.
Sudden I wake: where, where is Ferdinand?
I rave, I shriek; no Ferdinand replies;

Frantic

Frantic I rove thro' all your winding glades :
 I seek the shore, no Ferdinand appears!
 I climb yon craggy steeps; I see the ship
 Unfurling all her sails! I call aloud,
 I stamp, cry out; deaf as the roaring sea
 He catches ev'ry gale that blows from Heav'n,
 And cleaves his liquid way.

SYLVIA.

Why will you thus
 Recall your past afflictions?

CONSTANTIA.

Ah! what then,
 Thou wretched Constance, what were then thy feel-
 ings?

I rend my tresses, beat my breast in vain,
 In vain stretch out these ineffectual arms;
 Pierce with my frantic cries the wounded air;
 Dash my bare bosom on the flinty rock,
 Then rise again, and strain my aching sight,
 To see the ship still less'ning to my view,
 And take the last, last glimpse, as far, far off,
 In the horizon's verge she lessens still,
 Grows a dim speck, and mixes with the clouds
 Just vanishing, just lost,—ah! seen no more.

SYLVIA.

I pr'ythee don't talk so: my heart dies in me.
 Why won't you strive a little to forget
 This melancholy theme? The twilight grey
 Of morn but faintly streaks the east; the stars
 Still glimmer thro' the whit'ning air; the groves
 Are mute; yon all-devouring deep lies hush'd;
 The tuneful birds, and the whole brute creation
 Still sink in soft oblivious slumber wrapp'd,

For-

Forgetful of their cares. All, all but you
 Know some repose : you pass the dreary night
 In tears and ceaseless grief ; then rising wild
 Anticipate the dawn, and here resume
 Your doleful task, or else ascend the height
 Of yonder promontory ; there forlorn
 You sit, and hear the brawling waves beneath
 Lash the resounding shore ; your brimful eye
 Still fix'd on that sad quarter of the heav'ns
 Where my hard father disappear'd.

CONSTANTIA.

Yes, there
 My melancholy loves to dwell ; there loves
 To sit, and pine over its hoard of grief ;
 To roll these eyes o'er all the fullen main,
 In hopes some sail may this way shape its course
 With the glad tidings of the human race !
 Could I behold that dear, that wish'd for sight,
 Could I but see some vestiges of man,
 Some mark of social life, ev'n tho' the ship
 Should shun this isle, and court propitious gales
 Beneath some happier clime ; yet still the view
 Would cheer my soul, and my heart bound with joy
 At that faint prospect of my fellow creatures.
 But not for me, such transport ; not for me !
 Dear native land, I now no more must see thee,
 Condemn'd in ever-during solitude to mourn,
 From thy sweet joys, society, debarr'd !

SYLVIA.

But to your happiness what's wanting here ?
 Full many a time I've heard you praise the arts,
 The polish'd manners, and gay scenes of bliss
 Which Europe yields ; yet ever and anon
 I from your own discourse can gather too

That

That happiness is all unknown to Europe :
 That envy there can dwell, and discontent ;
 The smile, that wakens at another's woe ;
 The heart, that sickens at another's praise ;
 The tongue, that carries the malignant tale ;
 The little spirit, that subverts a friend :
 Fraud, perfidy, ingratitude, and murder.
 Now sure with reason I prefer these scenes
 Of innocence, tranquility, and joy !

CONSTANTIA.

Alas ! my child, 'tis easy to forego
 Untasted sweets, pleasures you never knew.

SYLVIA.

Are we not here what you yourself have told me
 In Europe sovereigns are ? Here we have fix'd
 Our little sylvan reign. The guileless race
 Of animals, that roam the lawns and woods,
 Are tractable and willing subjects ; pay
 Passive obedience to us ; and yon sea
 Becomes our tributary ; hither rolls
 In each hoarse-murm'ring tide his various stores
 Of daintiest shell-fish. The unbidden earth,
 Of human toil all ignorant, pours forth
 Whatever to the eye, or taste, can prove
 Rare, exquisite, and good. At once the spring
 Calls forth its green delights, and summer's blush
 Glows on each purple branch. The seasons here

On the same tree, with glad surprize,
 Behold each other's gifts arise :
 Spontaneous fruits around us grow ;
 For ever here the Zephyrs blow :

Shrubs ever flow'ring,
 Shades embow'ring ;

Heav'nly

Heav'nly spots,
 Cooling grotts,
 Verdant mountains,
 Falling fountains;
 Pure limpid rills,
 Adown the hills,
 That wind their way,
 And o'er the meadows play,
 Enamour'd of th' enchanted ground.

CONSTANTIA.

What is this waste of beauty, all these charms
 Of cold, inanimate, unconscious nature,
 Without the social sense?

SYLVIA.

Those beauteous tracts
 Which you so much regret, are full of men;
 And men, you know, are animals of prey:
 I'm sure that you yourself have told me so
 A thousand times.

CONSTANTIA.

And if I have, my child,
 I told a dismal truth. Oh! they are false,
 Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers:
 Their unrelenting hearts no harbour know
 For honour, truth, humanity, or love.

SYLVIA.

Well then, in this lone isle, this dear retreat
 From them at least we're free.

CONSTANTIA.

Poor innocent!
 I can't but grieve for her. (*bursts into tears*)

SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

Why fall afresh
Those drops of sorrow? Pray you, now give o'er.

CONSTANTIA.

My heart will break. I do not grieve, my child.
I can't conceal my tears: they will have way.

SYLVIA.

Nay, if you love me, fure you will not thus
Make my heart ake within me!

CONSTANTIA.

No, my sweet;
I will not weep. All will be well, my love.
Oh! misery! I can't, I can't contain.
The black ingratitude! (*weeps*)

SYLVIA.

Say, is there aught
Sylvia can do, that may afford you comfort?
If there is, tell me. Shall I fetch my fawn?
Dry up your tears, and he is your's this moment.

CONSTANTIA.

No, Sylvia, no!

SYLVIA.

He must, he shall be your's.
Refuse me not. I'll run and bring him to you.

[*Exit.*

CON.

CONSTANTIA. (*alone*)

Alas ! I fear my brain will turn—the sun
 Full sixteen times has made his annual course,
 Since here I've dragg'd a miserable being,
 The victim of despair ; which long e'er now,
 To phrenzy kindling, must have forc'd me dash
 My brain in madness on yon flinty rocks,
 And end my pangs at once ; if the keen instinct
 Of strong maternal love had not restrain'd
 My wild disorder'd soul, and bade me live
 To watch her tender infancy ; to rear
 Her blooming years ; with fond delighted care
 To tend each blossom of her growing mind,
 And see light gradual dawning on her soul.
 And yet to see her thus, to see her here,
 Cut off from ev'ry social bliss ; condemn'd,
 Like some fair flow'r that in a desert blows,
 To breath its sweets into the passing wind,
 And waite its bloom all unperceiv'd away !
 It is enough to break a mother's heart.
 Let me not think on't ; let me shun that thought.
 (*sits down, and sings*)

I.

What tho' his guilt my heart hath torn,
 Yet lovely is his mien,
 His eyes mild-op'ning as the morn,
 Round him each grace is seen.
 But oh ! ye nymphs, your loves ne'er let him win,
 For oh ! deceit and falsehood dwell within.

II.

From his red lips his accents stole,
 Soft as kind vernal snows ;
 Melting they came, and in the soul
 Desire and joy arose.

But oh! ye nymphs, ne'er listen to his art,
For oh! base falsehood rankles in his heart.

III.

He left me in this lonely state!
He fled, and left me here,
Another Ariadne's fate,
To mourn the live-long year.
He fled; but oh! what pains the heart must prove,
When we reveal the crimes of him we love!

Re-enter SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

I cannot bring him now: in yonder stream,
That through its pebbled channel glides along,
Soft murm'ring to the sea, he stands to cool
His beauteous form in the pure limpid rill.

CONSTANTIA.

To thee he causes joy; but joy to me
There's nothing now can bring. Left by my husband!
By the false, barb'rous man!

SYLVIA.

And yet this man,
This false, deceitful man, you still regret.
I vow, I can't but think, 'midst all your grief,
All your reproaches, your complaints against him,
That still this false, this cruel, fell deceiver,
Has found,—I know not why—within your breast
Some tender advocate, to plead his cause.

CON-

CONSTANTIA.

No, Sylvia, no; my love is turn'd to hate.

SYLVIA.

Then dry your sorrows, and this day begin
A happier train of years. And lo! the sun
Emerges from the sea: he lifts his orb
Above the purpled main, and streams abroad
His golden fluid o'er the world. The birds
Exulting wake their notes; all things rejoice,
And hills, and groves, and rocks, and vallies smile.
Let me entreat you then forget your cares,
And share the general bliss.

*(The sun is seen to rise at a distance, as it were
out of the sea)*

CONSTANTIA.

Once more all hail,
Thou radiant power, who in your bright career,
Or rising or descending, hast beheld
My never-ceasing woe! Again thou climb'st
In orient glory, and recall'st the cares,
And toils of man and beast! But oh! in all
Your flaming course, your beams will never ligh
Upon a wretch so lost, so curst as I am.

SYLVIA.

And yet, my mother——

CONSTANTIA.

Mine are pangs, my child,
Strokes of adversity no time can cure,
No lenient arts can soften or assuage.
But I'll not grieve thee, Sylvia; I'll retire

To some sequester'd haunt: there, all forlorn,
I'll sit, and wear myself away in thought. *[Exit.]*

SYLVIA. *(alone)*

Alas! how obstinately bent on grief
Is her whole mind! the votarist of care!
In vain I try to soften her afflictions,
And with each art beguile her from her woe.
I chide, intreat, caress, yet all in vain.
And what to me seems strange, perverse, and
wond'rous,
The more I strive, the more her sorrows swell;
Her tears the faster fall, fall down her cheek
In streams so copious, and such bitter anguish,
That I myself at length, I know not how,
Catch the soft weakness, and o'erpow'r'd with grief,
Flow all dissolving in unbidden tears.
Assist her Heav'n! her heart will break at last.
I tremble at the thought. I'll follow straight,
And still implore, beseech, try ev'ry way
To reconcile her to herself and me.
But see, look yonder! what a sight is there!
What can it mean, that huge, enormous mass,
That moves upon the bosom of the deep!
A floating mountain!—No: a mountain never
Could change its place. For such a monstrous bulk
How light it urges on its way! how quick,
How rapid in its course! What can it be?
I'll to the shore, and from the pointed rock
That juts into the waves, at leisure view
This wond'rous sight, and what it is explore.

End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T the S E C O N D.

SCENE, *Another view of the Island, with an opening to the sea between several hills and rocks.*

Enter SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

STILL I behold it ; still it glides along
Thro' the tumultuous sea. And lo ! before it
The waves divide ! and now they close again,
Leaving a tract of angry foam behind.
It must be, sure, some monster of the deep.
And see ! upon its huge broad back it bears
Expanded wings, that, spreading to the wind,
Lie broad incumbent o'er the surge beneath.
Ah ! save me, save me ! what new forms appear !
What shapes of unknown being rise before me !
From yon huge monster's side they issue forth,
And bolt upon the shore !—behold, they stop,
And now with eager, disconcerted pace,
Precipitate rush forward on the isle !
Now 'mongst the rocks they wind their silent way.
Protect me, Heav'n ! defend me ! shield me !—ah !
Hide me, ye woods, within your deep recess ;
Ne'er may these monsters penetrate your haunts ;
Ne'er trace my footsteps thro' your darksome ways.
Behind the covert of this woodbine bow'r
Oh ! let me rest conceal'd ! (*she retires*)

Enter FERDINAND and HENRICO.

HENRICO.

No trace appears,
No vestige here is seen of human kind.
'Tis drear, 'tis waste, and unfrequented all.
And hark!—what noise!—from yonder toiling deep
How dreadful sounds the pealing roar!—My friend,
My valued Ferdinand, 'twere best retire.
This cannot be the place.

FERDINAND.

Oh! my Henrico,
This is the fatal shore. The well-known scene;
Yon bay, yon rocks, yon mountains, from whose
brow
Th' imbow'ring forest overhangs the deep;
Each well-remember'd object strikes my view,
Answers the image in my mind preserv'd,
Engraven there by love's recording hand,
And never, but with life, to fade from thence.

HENRICO.

And yet thy love-enfeebled soul may form
Imaginary tokens of resemblance.
The soil unbeaten seems by mortal step.

FERDINAND.

My heart in ev'ry pulse confirms it to me.
This is the place, the dreary spot, where fate
Began to weave the tissue of my woes.
Oh! I was curst, abhorr'd of Heav'n, or else
I ne'er had trusted the contentious waves,
But kept my store of happiness at home.

HEN-

HENRICO.

Repine not for an action that arose
From filial piety. A father's mandate
Requir'd obedience from you.

FERDINAND.

To his summons
I paid a glad attention. Yet, good Heav'n!
Why in that early period of my bliss
Should then his orders come, to dash my joys?
Oh! I was blest with all that rarest beauty,
With all that ev'ry Venus of the mind,
The tender heart, and the enliven'd wit
Could pour delightful on the raptur'd sense
Of the young bridegroom, whose admiring eyes
Still hung enamour'd on her ev'ry charm,
And thence drank long inspiring draughts of love,
Unfated still, still kindling at the view.

HENRICO.

Indeed, my Ferdinand, thy fate was hard!

FERDINAND.

Each soft desire, each joy refin'd was mine.
The hours soft glided by, and as they pass'd
Scatter'd new blessings from their balmy wings;
They saw our ever-new delight; they saw
A blooming offspring crown our mutual loves;
The mother's features, and her ev'ry grace
In this our daughter exquisitely trac'd.
But to be torn from that supreme of bliss!
My wife, Constantia,—and my beateous babe,
Here to be left on this untravell'd isle,
To pine in bitterness of want! their bed
The cold bare earth, while the inclement winds

From yonder main came howling round their heads,
 Until at length the friendly hand of Death
 In pity threw his shroud upon their woes.

HENRICO.

Too sure, I fear, they're lost.

FERDINAND.

Perhaps, my friend,
 Perhaps, when gasping in the pangs of death,
 When ev'ry beauty faded from her cheek,
 And her eye languish'd motionless and dim,
 Perhaps ev'n then, in that sad, dismal hour,
 My name still hover'd on her quiv'ring lips,
 And nought but death could tear me from her heart.

HENRICO.

Her tend'rest thoughts no doubt were fix'd on thee.

FERDINAND.

Her tend'rest thoughts? Oh! no: her utmost rage.
 Who knows, Henrico, but she deem'd me false;
 Deem'd me a vile deserter from her arms?
 She did, she must: each strong appearance join'd
 To mark me guilty. Oh! that thought strikes
 deep
 Its scorpion stings into my very heart.
 Could she but think me so refin'd in guilt,
 So exquisite a villain, as to cause
 A moment's anguish in that tender breast,
 Where all the loves, where all the virtues dwelt;
 'Twere misery, 'twere torture in th' extreme!
 And yet she thought me such; by Heav'n she did;
 Accus'd me of the worst, the blackest treason,
 Of treason to my love! Stung with th' idea
 She roam'd this isle, and to these desert wilds
 Pour'd

Pour'd forth her lamentable tale. Who knows
 But on some craggy cliff whole nights she sat
 Raving in madness to the moon's pale gleam;
 Until at length all kindling into phrenzy,
 Clasping her infant closer to her breast,
 With desperation wild from off the rock
 Headlong she plung'd into the roaring sea,
 And her last accents murmur'd faithless Ferdinand!

HENRICO.

Distract not thus your soul with fancied woes.
 She could not think thee faithless; thee, whose
 mind,
 Whose ev'ry virtue were so well approv'd.

FERDINAND.

Still will I hope she did not. Oh! she knew
 I made that voyage in duty to a father.
 Awhile we steer'd a happy course, until
 Beneath the burning line, from whence the sun
 In straight direction pours his ardent blaze
 On ev'ry fever'd sense, a storm arose,
 Sudden and wild; as if a war of nature
 Were thund'ring o'er our heads. Full twenty days
 It drove us headlong on the dashing surge
 Far from our destin'd way, until at length
 In evil hour we landed on this isle.

SYLVIA returns, and peeps from behind a hedge.

SYLVIA.

Methought I heard a sound, as if they both
 Held mutual converse. Yonder lo! they stand:
 They do not follow me. What can they be?

FER-

FERDINAND.

There is the spot, just where yon aged tree
 Imbrowns the plain beneath, on which the villains,
 The unrelenting band of pirates, seiz'd me.
 There I receiv'd my wound, and there I fought
 Till my sword shiver'd in my hand. Worn out,
 Oppress'd by numbers, pow'rless, and disarm'd,
 They bore me headlong to the beach; in vain
 Piercing the air with horrid cries; in vain
 Back tow'rd the cave, where poor Constantia slept,
 With her lov'd infant daughter in her arms,
 Straining my ardent eyes; my eyes alone!
 For oh! their cruelty had bound my arms,
 And tears and looks were all I then could use.

SYLVIA.

The voice but indistinctly strikes my ear,
 Would they would turn this way.

FERDINAND.

Fetter'd, ty'd down,
 They dragg'd me to the vessel. Bore me hence.
 In vain our ship pursu'd: in vain gave chase.
 Form'd with detested skill, the guilty bark
 In which they plung'd me, gliding o'er the main,
 Outstripp'd their tardy course. We steer'd away
 Far to the regions of accursed bondage.
 Far from Constantia, far from ev'ry joy
 A doating husband, and delighted father
 Feels in mix'd rapture with his wife and child.
 Oh! I could pour my complaints—but I'll not wound
 Thy ear, my friend; with further lamentation.

HENRICO.

Would Heaven I could remove the cause.

FER-

FERDINAND.

Alas!

That cannot be. Thou can'st not bid return
 The irrevocable flight of time; recall
 The moments of our young delight; annul
 And render void, what once the hand of fate
 Hath from it's stores of woe pour'd down upon me,

SYLVIA. (*half concealed*)

Why will they stand with looks averted thus?
 I long to see their countenance and mien.

FERDINAND.

But yet, thou best of friends, yet grant me this.
 Assist my search; Oh! let me roam around
 This fatal shore! the isle's circumference
 Circles a scanty space. We cannot lose
 Each other here. Do thou pursue that path
 That leads due east: this way I'll bend my course.

HENRICO.

By Heav'n there is no task of hardihood,
 Of toil, or danger, but I'll try for thee;
 For thee, my friend: to thee I owe my life,
 And that more precious boon, my liberty:
 Thou hast releas'd me from the galling chain,
 From slav'ry's bitter pressure. 'Twas thy skill
 That form'd the plan of freedom, seiz'd the vessel,
 And made your friends the partners of your flight.
 For thee I'll roam around: but oh! I fear
 Our search will prove in vain.

FERDINAND.

Too sure it will.
 And yet it is the doom of love like mine

To

To dwell for ever on the sad idea
 Of the dear object lost; to visit oft
 (A lonely pilgrim) ev'ry well known scene,
 Each haunted glade, where the lov'd object stray'd;
 To call each circumstance of pass'd delight
 Back to the soul: in fond excursions seek
 Her dear lamented form. Then, oh! my friend,
 Then let me taste that sad, that pensive comfort.
 Range thro' these wilds; ascend each craggy steep,
 Try in each grotto, in each gloomy cave
 If haply there remain some vestige of Constantia.

[Exit.]

HENRICO.

On yonder beach we'll meet again. Farewell!

SYLVIA.

Conceal thee, Sylvia. Ah!—it comes this way!
 Then let me seek the covert of the woods,
 Where nods the brownest horror; there lie safe
 From the unusual sight of these strange beings.

[Exit.]

HENRICO, *solus*.

How cruel is my friend's condition! Doom'd
 For ever to regret, yet never find
 The object of his soul. His early love
 He lavish'd all on her: with her it goes
 To the dank grave, and leaves him hapless here
 To die a lingering death. Yet still I'll try,
 By ev'ry office friendship can perform,
 To heal the wound that preys upon his life.

[Exit.]

Scene

Scene, Another Part of the Island.

Enter SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

What have my eyes beheld? My flutt'ring heart
Beats quick in strange emotions. From yon grove
Of tufted trees, I saw this nameless being
Walk o'er the russet heath. It's face appear'd
Confess'd to view. It cannot be a man.
No lines of cruelty deform'd his visage.
Were it a man, his untam'd, savage soul,
Would strongly speak in each distorted feature.
This was all pleasing, amiable, and mild:
A gentle sorrow, bright'ning into smiles,
Such as bespoke a calm, yet feeling spirit,
Sat on it's peaceful brow, and o'er it threw
A gentle gleam of sweetness and of pain.
It cannot be a woman neither; no;
The dress accords not with that mode, which oft
My mother hath describ'd. Whate'er it be,
Attraction dwells about it; winning smiles;
Affuasive airs of tenderness and joy.
I'll seek my mother: she perhaps may know
These forms, to me unusual. By this row
Of darksome pines, my steps, all unperceiv'd,
May gain the place where with assiduous hand
She works, and teaches the rude rocks to tell
Her mournful elegy. What mean my feet?
Why stand they thus forgetful of their office?
Why heaves th' involuntary sigh? And why
Thus in quick pulses beats my heart? My eyes
A misty dimness covers: in my ears
Strange murmurs sound; my very breath is lost.
What can it be?—I know thee, Fear!—'tis thou
That caus'est this! And yet it can't be fear.

Fear

Fear cannot thrill with pleasure thro' the veins ;
Knows not this dubious joy, these grateful trem-
blings.

I cannot guess what these emotions mean,
Nor what this busy thing my heart would want !
Let me seek shelter in my mother's arms. [Exit.

*Scene changes to the first View of the Island, where
Constantia's Inscription is seen.*

Enter FERDINAND.

FERDINAND.

No ; never more shall these fond eyes behold her.
Lost, lost, my poor Constantia lost ! In vain
I search these gloomy woods ; in vain call out
Her honour'd name to ev'ry hill and dale.
My eyes are false, or on the craggy base
Of yonder rock some instrument appears,
The mark of human kind. A broken sword !
Oh ! all ye heav'nly pow'rs !—the very same !
This once was mine ! Unfaithful to its trust,
It fail'd me at my utmost need. I see
The well known characters ; the very words
That form'd its motto. 'Tis, it is the same.
Oh ! were Constantia found ! What do I see ?
All o'er with hair the flinty rock bestrew'd !
These were her decent tresses ; these in anguish
She tore relentless from her beauteous head,
Up by the roots she tore, and scatter'd wild
To all the passing winds. She still may live !
Constantia !—ha !—what mystic characters
Are hewn into the rock ?—My name appears !

(he reads)

STOP

STOP TRAVELLER.
 HERE
 CONSTANTIA,
 WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,
 SYLVIA,
 WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,
 THE PERFIDIOUS
 FERDINAND;
 WHO PRETENDING TO LAND HER
 FOR REFRESHMENT
 FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,
 BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER
 ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,
 WHERE SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Support me, Heav'n! Ah! no; withhold your aid,
 Ye unrelenting Pow'rs, and let me thus,
 Each vital spark subsiding, thus expire.

(leans against the rock)

Enter HENRICO.

HENRICO.

What hoa! my Ferdinand! this way the sound
 Struck on my list'ning ear. What means my friend
 Thus growing to the rock, transform'd to stone,
 A breathing statue, midst these shapeless piles?

FERDINAND.

Behold! read there!

HEN-

HENRICO.

Letters engrav'd!

[he reads part to himself, and then repeats aloud]

SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Alas! my friend—*(They gaze speechless at each other for some time, then Ferdinand falls)*The storm of grief o'erpow'rs his feeble spirits.
Now rouse thy strength, my Ferdinand, and bear
This load of sorrow like a man.

FERDINAND.

I do;

Thou see'st I do. I do not weep, my friend.

These eyes are dry; their very source is dry.

I am her cruel husband to the last.

HENRICO.

Oh! thou wert ever kind and tender to her.

FERDINAND.

Tender and kind!—look there!—there stands the
black,

The horrid roll of guilt denounc'd against me.

Lo! the dread characters! let me peruse

The whole sad record; of this bitter woe

Still deeper drink, and gorge me with affliction.

(he reads)

FRIEND!

WHOE'ER THOU ART,

PITY MY WRONGS,

BUT

BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND,
 (FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET
 WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)
 I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE RE——

Revenge, she meant to say : the word's begun !
 But Death untimely stopt her hand. Oh ! misery !
 She thought me false ; and yet could love me still.
 The wound now pierces deeper. Had she loath'd me,
 Abhorr'd me, curs'd me, 'twere not half the torture
 This angel-goodness causes. And to lose her !
 To lose a mind like her's, that thus could pour
 Such unexampled tenderness and love,
 Amidst the keenest anguish ! On the earth
 Measure thy length, thou wretch accurst ! there lie,
 For ever lie, and to these woods and wilds
 Howl out thy griefs in madness and despair.

HENRICO.

I feel, I feel thy sorrows. Oh ! my friend,
 Cruel event ! your tears, alas ! are just.
 Those gushing sorrows may assuage your grief,
 This storm of rage attemp'ring into peace.

FERDINAND.

Who talks of peace ? Let phrenzy seize my brain.
 Come, moon-struck Madness, with thy glaring eye,
 And clanking chain ; come, shoot thy kindling fires
 Into my utmost soul ; blast ev'ry pow'r ;
 Raze each idea out ; tear up at once
 The seat of memory—no—leave me that ;
 Still leave me memory, to picture forth
 Constantia's lovely form, that I may sit,
 With unclad sides, upon some blasted heath,
 And gloat upon her image ; see her still,

See her whole days with fancy's gushing eye,
And gaze on that alone.

HENRICO.

Arise, my friend,
And quit this fatal shore.

FERDINAND.

And quit this shore!
But whither turn? Ah! whither shall I go?
Where shelter me from misery?—This isle
Shall be my journey's bound.

HENRICO.

What can'st thou mean?

FERDINAND.

Never again to draw the vital air
But where my love expir'd! To feed my soul
With these sad objects, this sepulchral tale,
Ev'n to the height of yet unheard-of anguish:
To print my pious kisses on the rock;
To bathe the ground, which her dear footsteps
 press'd,
With the incessant tears of burning anguish;
To make these wilds all vocal with her name,
Till this cold lifeless tongue shall move no more.

HENRICO.

By Heav'n, you must not stay.

FERDINAND.

Farewell! farewell!
Consult thy happiness!—for ever here
By fate I'm doom'd to stay. Alas! Constantia!

To

To perish with thy infant here ! No friend
 To close thy ghastly orbs ! Thy pale remains
 On the bare earth expos'd, without the tribute
 Of a fond husband's tears o'er thy dead corse ;
 Without the last sad obsequies ! Yet here,
 I still will raise an empty sepulchre.
 There shall no cold, unconscious marble form,
 In mockery of imitated woe,
 Bend o'er the fancy'd urn : myself will be
 The sad, the pensive, monumental figure,
 Distilling real anguish o'er the tomb ;
 Till wasting by degrees I moulder down,
 And sink to silent dust.

HENRICO.

What man could do,
 Already you've perform'd——

FERDINAND.

Prithee, no more.
 I will about it streight. This place affords
 Materials for the work. Thither I'll bring
 Whate'er can deck the scene. Constantia, yes :
 I will appease thy discontented shade,
 Then follow thee to yonder realms of bliss.

[Exit.

HENRICO.

His vehemence of grief bears down his reason.
 He must not linger here. His stay were fatal.
 Force will be necessary : to our vessel
 I'll hasten back, and call some trusty friends
 To bear him from this melancholy shore.

End of the SECOND ACT.

D d 2

ACT

A C T the T H I R D.

*The same Scene continues.**Enter SYLVIA.*

THRO' the thick-woven shade of arching bowr's,
Thro' walks, where never sun-beam pierc'd, at
length

I've gain'd this deep-encircled vale. Ah! me!
I feel strange tremors still. She is not here!
Constantia!—no reply:—her mournful task
Waits for her ling'ring hand.—What noise is that?
I heard some steps advancing. 'Tis my fawn
That rustles thro' the forest glade: he stops
And looks, then runs, and stops again, to take
A fearful gaze! he too perhaps has seen
These unknown beings. Yonder lo! he stands
In mute expressive wonder. Heav'n protect me!
Thro' this close path, that gradual winding up
Leads on to plains, to woods, to verdant lawns
Embosom'd in the rock, I'll journey up.
The day now glows intense, but by the rills,
That thro' embow'ring groves come purling down,
I oft can lay me, and enjoy each breeze
That plays amid those craggy scenes. A noise
From yonder interwoven branches. Ha!
Ye guarding angels, save me!—see, see there!
It comes again!

Enter HENRICO.

HENRICO.

What beauteous form in these forelone abodes
Attracts my wond'ring eyes?

SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

Ye heav'nly powr's ! *[retiring from him.]*

HENRICO.

It swims before my sight. Whate'er thou art,
Virgin, or goddess—oh ! a goddess sure !
Thou goddess of these mansions ! for thy looks
Beam heav'nly radiance, with propitious ears
Accept my supplication.

SYLVIA.

Ha ! it speaks ;
It speaks ! what dost thou mean ?

HENRICO.

Oh ! say what place,
What clime is this ? And what art thou that thus
Adorn'st this lone retreat ?

SYLVIA.

Will you first
Promise to come no nearer ?

HENRICO.

With devotion
As true as ever pilgrim offer'd up
In holy fervor to his saint, I promise.

SYLVIA.

How gentle it's demeanor ! tell me now
Who and what art thou ?

HENRICO.

I am born to misery ;
A man, whom fate——

SYLVIA.

A man !—art thou a man ?
Defend me Heav'n ! ye guardian powr's protect me,
[*running away.*

HENRICO.

Nay, fly me not : a sudden impulse here
Bids me pursue. Forgive, thou unknown fair,
That with soft violence I thus presume
To force thee measure back thy steps again.
[*he brings her back.*

SYLVIA.

Force me not thus, inhuman, barb'rous man !
What have I said—Oh ! worthy gen'rous man,
Thus on my knees I beg ; have mercy on me,
I never did you harm ; indeed I did not.

HENRICO.

Arise, (*raises her*) thou lovely tenant of these
woods,
And let me thus, thus as befits the man
Whose mind runs o'er with rapture and surprize,
Whose heart throbs wild with mingled doubt and joy,
Thus let me worship this celestial form,
This heav'nly brightness, to my wond'ring eyes
That sheds such influence, as when an angel
Breaks thro' a flood of glory to the sight
Of some expiring faint, and cheers his soul
With visions of disclosing heav'n.

SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

He kneels !
 He kneels to me ! how mild his e'ery look !
 How soft each word !—can man be tender thus,
 Of gentle mien, compassionate and kind ?

HENRICO.

In me thou see'st a wretch, whose heart is prone
 To melt at each idea beauty prints
 On his delighted sense ; and sure such beauty,
 Touch'd by the hand of harmony, adorn'd
 With inexpressive graces, well may claim
 My lowliest adoration and my love.

SYLVIA.

This language all is new ; but still it has
 I know not what of charming in't, that gains
 Upon the list'ning ear. If this be falshood,
 Then falshood can assume a pleasing look.

HENRICO.

Oh ! if thou art as gracious as thou'rt fair,
 Say have you seen Constantia ? when and where,
 And how did she expire ?

SYLVIA.

Constantia lives.
 Why did'st thou say expire ? My mother lives,
 Lives in these blest abodes.

HENRICO.

Oh ! gentle Sylvia,
 So I will call thee, daughter of Constantia,
 Oh ! fly and find her out. Mean time I'll seek
 Th' afflicted Ferdinand.—

D d 4

SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

What dost thou say?
 Can he, can Ferdinand be here? That false,
 Perfidious, barb'rous man, can he be here?

HENRICO.

He is, my fair; nor barbarous nor false.
 Fortune that made him wretched, could no more.
 Anon you'll know the whole; to waste a moment
 In conf'rence now, and longer to suspend
 The meeting of this pair, who now in agony
 Bemoan their lot, were barbarous indeed.

SYLVIA.

But may I trust him? Won't he do her harm?

HENRICO.

He won't, my beauteous fair.

SYLVIA.

Is he like you?

HENRICO.

His goodness far transcends me.

SYLVIA.

Then I think
 I'll venture to comply. Let's go together.

HENRICO.

Oh! I could tend thy steps for ever; hear
 Soft accents warbling from thy vermeil lip;
 Watch thy mild-glancing eye; behold how grace,
 D 4 What-

Whate'er you do, which ever way you bend,
 Guides each harmonious movement; but this hour
 Is friendship's due: then let us instant fly
 Thro' diff'rent windings; thou to seek Constantia,
 And I to find her husband: haply so
 Their meeting will be soon. Mean time farewell!
 I'll bring him to this very spot. Adieu!
 For a short interval adieu, my love!

SYLVIA.

Farewell!—another word: pray what's your name?

HENRICO.

Fair excellence, Henrico I am call'd.

SYLVIA.

Pray do not tarry long, Henrico,

HENRICO.

Why
 That pleasing charge, my sweet?

SYLVIA.

I cannot tell;
 But as you're leaving me, each step you move,
 My spirits sink; a melancholy gloom
 Darkens the scene around, and I methinks
 Helpless in solitude am left again,
 To wander all alone a dreary way.

HENRICO.

Thou angel sweetness! I'll return anon;
 Yes, I will come, and at that lovely shrine
 Pour out my adoration and my vows.

Yes,

Yes, I will come, to part from thee no more;
A moment now farewell! *[Exit.]*

SYLVIA. (*alone*)

Farewell! be sure you keep your word: he's gone,
And yet is with me still. Absent I hear
And see him in his absence: still his looks
Beam with mild dignity, and still his voice
Sounds in my ear delightful. What it means,
This new-born sense, this wonderful emotion,
Unfelt till now, and mix'd of pain and joy,
I cannot guess. How my heart flutters in me!
I'll not perplex myself with vain conjecture.
Whate'er the cause, th' effect, I feel, is pleasing.

[Constantia is heard singing within the scenes.]

Ah! me! what noise is that? My mother's voice
Again she pours her melancholy forth,
As sweetly plaintive, as when Philomel,
Beneath some poplar shade, bemoans her young,
And sitting pensive on the lonely bough,
Her eye with sorrow dimm'd, she tunes her dirge,
Warbling the night away, while all around
The vocal woodland, and each hill and dale
Ring with her griefs harmonious. Hark! that way
It sounds. All gracious pow'rs direct me to her.
[Exit.]

Enter CONSTANTIA.

CONSTANTIA.

From walk to walk, from glade to glade, o'er all
The sea-girt isle, o'er ev'ry mountain's top,
I roam from place to place; but oh! no place
Affords relief to me. The sun now leads
The sultry hours, and from his burning ray
Each living thing retires; yet I endure

His

His fiercest rage. The fever in my mind
 Heeds not external circumstance: each day
 Sees this sad heart fresh bleeding as at first.
 Delay not thus, ye cruel fates, but come
 And wrap me in eternal rest. Till then
 Let me pursue my melancholy task.

[works at the inscription.]

Enter FERDINAND.

FERDINAND.

Away with their ill-tim'd officious care.
 I'll none of it, 'Tis cruelty, not friendship:
 'Tis misery protracted; 'tis with art,
 Inhuman art to lengthen out the life
 Of him, who groans in torment. No; they never
 shall

Compel me back to a base world again!
 I've liv'd enough: my course is ended here;
 For here Constantia lies. Ye heav'nly pow'rs!
 What means upon yon consecrated ground
 That visionary form, with lifted arm
 And gleaming steel, that seems in act to carve
 The rugged stone?

CONSTANTIA.

What is't I hear! a voice!
 A groan! from whence—ha! *[Seeing Ferdinand.]*

FERDINAND.

'Tis Constantia's form!
 Her discontented shade, that hovers still
 About this place.

CON-

CONSTANCIA.

Delusive, air-drawn shape
Of that perfidious—ah! [*She faints away.*]

FERDINAND.

Leave me not thus.
Oh! ever gracious, ever gentle, say;
'Tis gone; in fullen silence gone!

Enter HENRICO.

HENRICO.

Quick let me find him, to his raptur'd ear
Give the delightful tididings—ha!

FERDINAND.

And thus
I sink at once and follow my belov'd,
[*Falls into Henrico's arms.*]

HENRICO.

He faints, he faints; the chilling dews of death
Distil thro' every pore. My Ferdinand,
Awake, arise, and hear the joyful sounds
Of happiness restor'd. His eyes unfold
To seek fair day light, and now close again
As if they sicken'd at the view.

FERDINAND.

Forbear,
And let me die!

HEN-

HENRICO.

Constantia lives ! she lives
Once more to fold thee in her warm embrace.

FERDINAND.

I saw her fleeting form : sullen and pale
It vanish'd from my sight.

CONSTANTIA.

Alas ! no help !
Oh ! death, where art thou ? *[coming to herself.]*

HENRICO.

Whence that voice ?
Constantia there ! behold ! she too entranc'd
Lies stretch'd upon the ground.

FERDINAND.

Where is Constantia ?
Oh ! let me catch the fleeting shade. 'Tis she !
It is my wife ! it is Constantia ! still,
Oh ! ecstasy of bliss ? She still survives !

CONSTANTIA.

'Tis mere illusion all ; the false creation
Of some deceitful dream.

FERDINAND.

'Tis real all.
Again I fold her thus ! the known embrace
Hath thrill'd it's wonted transport to my heart.
My life, my soul, thy Ferdinand is come.

CON-

CONSTANTIA.

And com'st thou then, inhuman as thou art,
Com'st thou again to wreak thy malice on me!

FERDINAND.

By heav'n I ne'er was false. Dash not my joys
With thy unkind suspicion of my love,
While thus transported far above the lot
Of human blifs, I prefs my lips to thine,
Inhaling balmy sweets, and all my soul
Runs o'er with blifs, with wonder and delight.

CONSTANTIA.

Did'st thou not meanly leave me here a prey—

FERDINAND.

And can Constantia deem me then so base?
Can she believe me such a vile betrayer?
Can'st thou?

CONSTANTIA.

On this unhospitable shore
Left as I was——

FERDINAND.

Oh! misery! thou we'rt!
While I was dragg'd by an insidious band
Of pyrates, savage blood-hounds! into bondage.
But witness heav'n, witness ye midnight hours
That heard my ceaseless groans, how dear thy image
Grew to my very heart!

CON-

CONSTANTIA.

And ha'st thou then
Been doom'd to slavery?

FERDINAND.

I have.

CONSTANTIA.

And groan'd
This long, long time beneath oppression's rod?

FERDINAND.

E'er since these eyes have gaz'd delighted on thee,
The bitter draught of misery was mine.

CONSTANTIA.

And wert thou true indeed?

FERDINAND.

By Heav'n I was.

CONSTANTIA.

And have I then accus'd thee? Have I pour'd
A thousand strong complaints against thee? Called
High judging Heav'n to witness to my wrongs?
Told all these wilds, these rocks, these wood crown'd
hills

Of injur'd truth and violated love?
Falsely I talk'd, unjustly I complain'd
Of injur'd truth and violated love;
My Ferdinand was true! again 'tis giv'n
With his lov'd form to glad these eyes, to rush
With eager transport to his fond embrace,

To

432 THE DESERT ISLAND.

To cling around his neck, and growing to him
Pour the warm tears of rapture and of love.

[they embrace.]

Enter SYLVIA.

SYLVIA.

I heard my mother's voice. What do I see?
In a man's arms! embracing and embrac'd!

FERDINAND:

Is that my Sylvia? Oh! it must be so.
My child, my child survives! survives to take
A raptur'd father's blessing, and o'erpay
His suff'rings past by this excess of joy,
This interview of mingled tears and kisses.

SYLVIA.

How gentle his deportment too! I feel
A soft attraction bind my soul to his.
Are these the men, whom you so oft describ'd
Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers?

CONSTANTIA.

I was deceiv'd myself, my child; for truth,
Honour, and love, and constancy are theirs.
I now have proof of unexampled goodness.

SYLVIA.

Indeed I strongly thought you wrong'd 'em much,
When first Henrico met my wond'ring eyes.

FERDINAND.

Henrico is my friend, my best Constantia,
And thou hereafter shalt know all his virtues.

SYLVIA

SYLVIA.

And shall I know him too?

HENRICO.

Thou shalt; and I
Will live thy slave, if thou wilt deign to love me.

SYLVIA.

Love you! I know not what you mean by love;
But if with pleasure to behold thee; if
To hang upon thy words; to mourn thy absence;
With joy to meet again, and feel my heart
Form new desires, and wish it knows not what,
If that be love, I do already love you.

HENRICO.

Then am I blest'd indeed! yes, thou shalt be—
My friend will smile consent—yes thou, fair nymph,
Shalt be my bride.

SYLVIA.

Your bride! what's that?

HENRICO.

My wife,

SYLVIA.

No, Sir, not that. I crave your pardon there,
To be left helpless on a desert island!

CONSTANTIA.

Thy father did not leave me, Sylvia; no;

He could not prove deliberately false,
His heart was unfusceptible of fraud,
Anon you'll know it all.

HENRICO.

Mean time, my fair,
Banish thy fears ; and let me with this kiss
On the white softness of this lovely hand,
For ever dedicate my heart.

SYLVIA.

Oh ! Heavn's !
What must I do, Mama ?

CONSTANTIA.

Requite his love
With fair return of thine.

SYLVIA.

Must I do so ?
The task appears not undelightful ; yes,
To thee I can resign myself. But tell me ;
Wilt thou ne'er leave me ? Wilt thou ever here
Fix thy abode ?

HENRICO.

No ; we'll convey thee hence,
To the soft influence of a milder clime :
There, like a flow'r transplanted, thou shalt flourish,
And ne'er regret this warmer southern sky,
But thrive and ripen, to the wond'ring world
Unfolding all thy sweets to higher bloom.

SYLVIA.

What place is that ? And whither will ye bear me ?

FER-

FERDINAND.

To thy dear native soil, to England, love.

SYLVIA.

To England !

HENRICO.

Yes ! the land of beauteous dames :
 'Mongst whom thy matchless excellence shall shine
 With undiminish'd radiance, and exert
 It's gentle pow'r, by innocence endear'd,
 By virtue heighten'd, and by modest truth
 Attemper'd to such sweetness, that each fair,
 With unrepining heart, and glad consent
 Shall own thy rival claim ; and ev'ry youth,
 Touch'd by the graces of thy native beauty,
 Shall join to make thy form the public care.

SYLVIA.

I cannot quit this Island ; cannot leave
 These woods, these lawns, these hills and deepning
 vales,
 These streams oft-visited, each well known haunt,
 Where hand in hand with innocence I've stray'd,
 And tasted joys serene as is the air,
 That pants upon yon trembling leaves.

FERDINAND.

Such joys
 For thee shall blossom in thy native land,
 And new delights arise. There cultur'd fields
 Wave with the golden harvest ; commerce pours
 Each delicacy forth ; there stately domes
 Attract the wond'ring eye ; there cities swarm
 With busy throngs intense, and smiles around

A scene of active, cheerful, social life.
Thither I'll lead thee, sweet.

SYLVIA.

And yet my heart
Misgives me much: does not contention there,
And civil discord render life a scene
Of care, and toil, and struggle? Does not war
From foreign nations oft invade the land,
With all his train of misery and death?

FERDINAND.

Thy lovely fears are groundless. Ours the land,
Where inward peace diffuses smiles around,
And scatters wide her blessings: there a king,
(My friend comes later thence, and tells me all)
There reigns a happy, venerable king,
Dispensing justice and maintaining laws,
That bind alike his people and himself.
From that source liberty, and ev'ry claim
A free-born people boast, flow equal on,
And harmonize the state; while in the eve
And calm decline of life our monarch sees
A royal grandson still to higher lustre
Each day expanding; emulous to trace
His grandfire's steps, to copy out his actions;
And bid the ray of freedom onward stretch
To ages yet unborn.

SYLVIA.

And do the people
Know their own happiness?

FERDINAND.

They do, my sweet:

Pleas'd

Pleas'd they behold their native rights secur'd;
Their commerce guarded, and the useful arts,
That raise, that soften, and embellish life,
All to perfection rising. With a sense
Of their own blessing touch'd, with one consent
They pour their treasures, and exhaust their blood
In their king's righteous cause. Fair Albion thus
Raises her envied head; thus ev'ry threat
Of foreign force, each menace of invasion
From a vain, vanquish'd, disappointed foe,
Like broken billows on her craggy cliffs,
Shall murmur at her feet in vain.

SYLVIA.

Methinks
I long to see this place.

FERDINAND.

My Sylvia, yes,
Thou shalt return: propitious gales invite.
Come, my Constantia——oh! what mix'd emotions
Heave in this bosom at the sight of thee?

CONSTANTIA.

My heart runs o'er with ecstasy of joy,
And tears must speak my happiness. I long
To utter all my fond, fond thoughts; to tell
The story of my woes, and hear of thine;
While at each word our hearts shall melt within us,
And thrill with grief, with tenderness, and love.

FERDINAND.

The tale shall serve us in our future hours
Of tender intercourse, to sweeten pain,
To calm adversity, and teach our souls

To

To bend in love, in gratitude, and praise
To the All-good on high, who thus befriends
The cause of innocence; who thus rewards
Our suffering constancy; whose hand, tho' slow,
Thus leads to rapture thro' a train of woe.

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End of the **THIRD VOLUME.**







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